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*THE SILVER FLEECE*



# THE SILVER FLEECE

## *AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY*

BY ROBERT COLLIS



*Decorated by T. G. WILSON*

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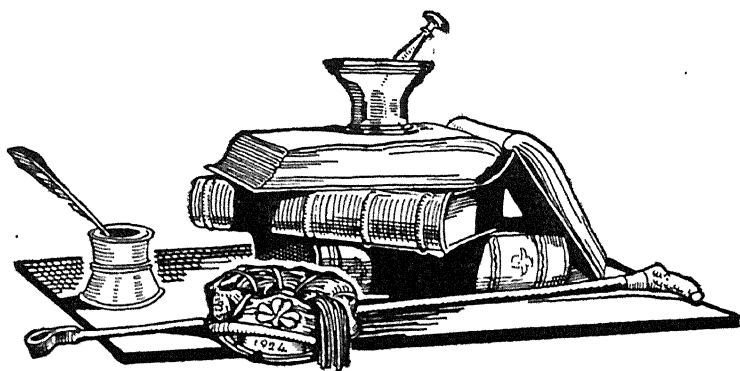
TO MY SONS

DERMOT AND ROBERT

of all attributes which require imagination

*kindness* needs it most





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## *PART ONE*







## CHAPTER I

### *Childhood*

**I**T IS SAID that our reactions in adult life are controlled chiefly by childhood memories which have become suppressed into the unconscious mind. It is curious therefore to find in my own case that I have retained vividly certain memories from a very early age which have consciously influenced my actions ever since.

One of the earliest of these is associated with the meadow grass in the garden at Kilmore. Before I was five I used to lie in the long grass where I had a world of my own: a forest of tall grass stalks and wild-flower stems inhabited by a strange people. When they cut the long grass it used

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to break my heart, and I would beg for certain "particularly important" places to be spared, and if they weren't I used to cry bitterly.

I remember the first time I found myself alone in the world. We had gone on a picnic to a wooded valley. I don't know how old I was, but I remember we went in some sort of horse vehicle, and that it was late summer. After the picnic meal I escaped some way from my elders and scrambled up a small wooded hill where the sun was filtering through the leafy branches of the trees. It was mysterious, and I was afraid. I came to a gap in the hedge at the opposite side of the wood and looked out upon a field through which ran a little river, and behind which the mountain rose steeply. Suddenly for the first time in my life I became conscious of beauty. Everything was still. I stood gazing at the scene, then turned round and ran back through the wood and down the hill and was taken home. I never tried to tell anybody about what I had seen.

Most vivid of all my childhood memories is the occasion on which I first met with death and destruction. One morning my father and my elder brother took their guns and began to fire at the rooks in the tall elm trees which towered above the rhododendrons on the wild bank in the garden at Kilmore. The sun was shining and the sea could be seen through the trees. The report of the gun broke into this scene of peace with remorseless violence. A rook fell on the gravel path close to me with a thud, its black feathers rumpled and wet with blood, dying. I ran to it and took it in my arms. I wanted to carry it into the long grass away from its enemies; but suddenly my brother and father saw

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me and laughed, while I stood there helpless before their greater power, blinded by tears.

The garden at Kilmore, set amid tall trees on the hill overlooking Killiney Bay, must be one of the most beautiful in all the world. To us children it was a safe haven from which we might set forth on unknown adventure. On one side it was bounded by a high wall which separated it from the large grounds of Judge Bramley, an ancient retired Anglo-Indian judge who remembered the Mutiny. In these grounds were five under-gardeners and a terrible old head-gardener with a limp. At the lower end of our garden the wall ceased and the two places were separated only by a thick hedge through which we were able to burrow. From here we used to set out upon thrilling explorations into these dangerous and unknown regions. Being well versed in the adventures of Peter Rabbit, and knowing full well the awful fate of his father, who had fallen into the hands of Mr. M'Gregor, we were horribly afraid of being caught by the head-gardener. I now suspect that he was a secret reader of the little books himself, for he played the part of Mr. M'Gregor with a masterly insight. If on rounding a corner we came on him suddenly, he would assume a ferocious expression and pursue us, limping with upraised and terrifying rake, while we fled panic-stricken for our hole in the hedge.

The adventurers consisted of my twin brother and myself, our youngest sister, who was four years older, and Towser. Towser, whose real name was Sandy MacNab, was an Aberdeen terrier. He came to Kilmore as a small puppy about the same time as we were born, and we grew up to-

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gether, he becoming one of the family. He was highly intelligent, and our devoted companion, but dignified and very Scottish. If perchance we went out for the day and left him behind he would regard us "more in sorrow than in anger" on our return. Most dogs will rush up wagging their tails full of welcome on such occasions. But not so Towser. He would turn his back on us, take up an old bone and pretend to be gnawing it. After a time he would glance over his shoulder, and at this we would approach, calling him endearing names. For a while he would continue to gnaw, then slowly turn round, and give his tail a little wag. We would prostrate ourselves before him with abject apologies. Gradually he would relent, and finally it would be made up.

If we went away for any length of time he became ill. Generally we took him everywhere. Once he got sunstroke in Llandrindod Wells, and went out to die in the park alone, where my father found him under a bush unconscious and carried him back to the hotel, where we revived him with ice to the head. For the rest of that trip through North Wales he lay full-length on the seat in the back of the car, while we children sat on the floor holding an umbrella over his head and constantly applying wet handkerchiefs to the back of his neck.

Among the other children whom we played with in those early days I remember Walter Starkie. He was two or three years older than I, but on one occasion he actually brought his steam-engine down to the beach to show me. I thought him a wonderful fellow: he knew so much about trains. Once he had travelled from Killiney to Dalkey on a

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real engine. He said he was going to be an engine-driver, and I begged to be allowed to be his stoker. He is now a stout professor of Spanish, writes books about gypsies and music, and can't drive a car.

When we were nine years old my twin brother and I were sent to Aravon School at Bray. Each day we set out from our home on the side of the hill at Killiney and travelled four miles by train to the school. At one point the line ran along a wall over which the sea used to wash on stormy days. Sometimes, indeed, the waves used to crash right over the train. The carriages had low partitions dividing the compartments, and on these days we used to open the windows and allow the waves to splash over the partition into the next compartment where the girls going to the French School at Bray used to travel. There was always a war with them, and they were apt to retaliate by leaning over, snatching our caps, and throwing them out of the window, for they knew that if we arrived at the school without caps we got into serious trouble.

It was a lovely journey, those four miles by Killiney Bay, and it's a sad thought that it has gone for ever, for the sea went on encroaching until the line had to be moved inland, and now even the old track is eaten away and crumbling into the sea. At the time, we accepted the beauty of the world we lived in and were quite unaware how exceptional our surroundings were, having nothing to compare them with. They grew to become part of ourselves however, so that later on we were appalled when we met the ugliness of the Midland towns in England.

Summer in Wicklow was lovely beyond words. We

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played cricket on a ground overlooked by the mountains. We bathed in deep, clear sea-water at a bathing-place among the rocks off Bray Head. What greater joy could there be than to swim, naked but for a slip, in the open sea, to dive into clear water, to battle with the waves and then to feel the salt water dry by the sun's heat on the skin, or to race, duck each other, and play in the water like young seals, and then return walking beside some child friend whom we loved as children love without thought or care, while we still tingled with the freshness of the sea!

I remember walking back towards the school on one such day. I can see the spot exactly, the railway bridge in front, the very pattern of the broken stones on the road. I was eleven years old. I was walking slowly with an attractive dark-skinned boy from the north, some two years younger than myself, to whom I was completely devoted.

"What are you going to be when you are a man?" he suddenly demanded.

I stopped, thought, and then I knew for certain.

"A doctor," I replied.

"I'm going to stick to the sea and be a sailor," he said.

The biggest decision of my life was made at that moment, and from that day it never occurred to me that I could be anything else, though my companion was at sea long before I even entered on the rigours of the medical student's life.

The school was somewhat hard to classify. It took boarders, day boys, and what were called day boarders. We belonged to the last class, which meant that we started

## CHILDHOOD

off early in the morning, remained at the school for lunch and tea, and then went home. The school took boys up to seventeen or eighteen, although at that time it was gradually becoming a regular "prep school" on English lines. The headmaster was an Englishman who, if he had worn top boots, would have completely resembled the traditional John Bull. He was almost completely deaf, a fact which gave the school its distinctive character. He was thick-set, stout, had a red face and scaly, hairy hands. He had an almost pathetic belief in British honour. He avowed that an Englishman never told a lie. Indeed this matter of the truth almost amounted to a neurosis in his character. He assured us that he would rather we committed any sin than lie to him. From time to time boys owned up to misdeeds hoping to be congratulated on their truthfulness, but they were quickly disillusioned. Their reward was only spiritual, and the punishment for the crime physical just the same.

Classes conducted by the headmaster degenerated more often than not into terrific encounters between him and us. His methods were original, and his deafness made him irritable and suspicious. His way of teaching arithmetic consisted of writing sums up on the board and then stimulating the class to effort by offering rewards to the "first done," while threatening dire penalties to the laggards. The result was panic among those of us with a congenital inability to add quickly. We would beg the quick boys for the answer in time to avert the storm. Being quite deaf he could not hear these half-whispered pleadings, though sometimes the noise from his form could be heard in the

## THE SILVER FLEECE

next room. To make up for his auditory handicap, however, his eyesight was exceedingly quick. Hence he was apt to pounce on a boy and violently declare that he was talking.

"No, sir," the small boy would answer, "my lips were only moving."

What happened next depended on who you were, the position you held in regard to British honour, and the condition of the headmaster's liver and other functions on that particular morning. If, like George Washington, you were one of those who had never been found out, and if the headmaster was feeling his best that day, the storm might pass over. But if he had reason to suspect you, or if you looked cunning, he would refuse to believe in your harmless lips and the trouble began.

"Stand up on the bench," he would roar. "Don't tell me a lie. Own up! You were talking—I heard you."

The latter statement we all knew to be false; but if at this point you refused to admit you had been talking, either because of obstinacy or because on this occasion you were innocent, it made no difference. In these circumstances a frightful scene would develop, the headmaster finally losing control of his temper and publicly flogging the victim. The more cunning soon learnt to own up abjectly, while tactfully mentioning that all they had done was to ask their next door neighbour for a nib. Bright lads often got away with some such plea, but boys whom he disliked were beaten soundly.

I had a particularly bad time with the headmaster over dictation, for I belong to that unfortunate group of man-



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kind who have been born with something lacking in their visual brain centres, and who often lose completely the appearance of a written word. At this age my spelling was atrocious, and I suffered agonies in the headmaster's dictation classes due to his unique method. On alternate days he would give us prepared and unseen dictation. On the former occasions I would learn up the piece with meticulous care, writing out the words I didn't know, and the result would be excellent. Next day would come the unseen dictation, and I would spell nearly every word wrong. He could not see the difference between his two methods, and would rage at me for not trying on the "unseen" occasion. Once I tried to explain the problem to him, shouting for a long time into his better ear. But he either could not or would not understand, and it availed me nothing. At that time I shared the belief, not uncommon among the young, that grown-ups are inherently unreasonable and without understanding. Hence in future I "played up to him" as best I could, and in consequence often got away with it. Apart from these eccentricities the headmaster was kind and liberal-minded in a certain limited way.

The general line of education in the school was of the orthodox variety found in the average pre-war British school. In 1909 the very idea that all subjects should be made interesting, or that boys should be encouraged to think for themselves, would have been considered unsound. It was a very unreal era, this pre-war period, a lull before the storm which was soon to shatter the world of make-believe in which we lived.

Our English headmaster on one occasion introduced a

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little book of Irish history, stating that Irishmen should know something of the story of their own country. This was a very gallant gesture on his part, and for half a term we studied the doings of the great Earl of Kildare and all the battles he fought. Naturally the little Irish history consisted almost solely of accounts of bloody battles, murders, massacres, and executions. No word concerning the policies of landlord and tenant or of Home Rule was contained in it. Even so the subject was considered "unsuitable" by somebody behind the scenes, and the experiment was dropped quietly at half-term while we returned once more to the safer study of the Wars of the Roses.

There was nothing unique to our school in this attempt on the part of the old to make the young think along "correct lines." Indeed, the same methods were being practised all over Europe at that moment. So when the trumpet of modern war sounded a few years later the boys of England, Germany, France, Russia, Italy, and the rest had been nicely prepared for the bloody game that had been planned for them. The young gentlemen of Ireland were to go forth to a man, to defend little Belgium, and to fight in the great cause—"the war to end war." Those who returned alive and unmaimed from that shambles of youth were to see Ireland ravished by civil war, and their country houses gutted while they themselves stood by, bewildered, regarded by their own people as foreigners, or worse.

During the summer holidays at this time we were taken to different parts of Ireland—to Ballycastle and Bundoran in the north, and Kenmare in the south.

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919772 There were sea-urchins in the pools at Ballycastle, and there was a goat at Bundoran which used to chase us. One day, in hot pursuit of my sister, it entered the front door of the house and came down the passage. My sister side-stepped into a room, but the goat swept on, eventually meeting the cook as she emerged from the kitchen with the tea-things. . . .

The holiday in Kenmare was a very wet one, but still I can remember the mysterious woods and the fairy islands in the estuary, covered with all kinds of flowering trees and shrubs, and the Blackwater in spate, a yellow brown flood crashing down a gorge into the sea.

9713 One week stands out for me from all the rest—a week spent at Glendalough in Wicklow, famous for its ancient Gaelic remains, the round tower, and the seven churches. The hotel in which we stayed was built chiefly of wood, rather like a Swiss chalet. A noisy chuckling brown stream ran immediately behind, across which a vine-covered wooden bridge led from the veranda to the entrance of the ruined Gaelic city. It had been raining heavily before we came, and the river was like a torrent, its noise filling the house and supplying a certain *motif* to all our thoughts and actions.

92 It was here I met Miriam. She was twelve years old and very fair, with blue eyes, and dressed in a tight-fitting jersey and tweed skirt, when I saw her first in the little back room of the hotel. She looked straight into my face as I entered, and happily I looked back at her, without shyness, as if we had met somewhere before. For a week—was it only a week?—we played together in the glens among the pine

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trees, in the old mossy oak woods by the loughs, or climbed the mountains that rose steeply around. Sometimes we would find great bunches of white heather, returning in triumph to distribute favours in the form of small sprigs of the lucky flower to the other inhabitants of the hotel, or to tourists coming for the day.

One day we went up the winding white road that leads to the Wicklow Gap, wildest of all passes through the mountains. We picnicked by Lough Nahanagan, a dark, mysterious tarn lying in a hollow scooped out among the hills surrounded by towering, gloomy, rock-faced mountains, desolate and beautiful. I had taken my bicycle to the bend of the road from where the path leaves it to lead up to the lough above; so on the way home, as the evening sun was capping the hilltops with golden crowns, and the valleys were dark, mysterious, and fey, Miriam climbed on to the step of my bicycle and we sped down the steep hill together. Her arms clung tightly round my neck, her cheek was close to mine, her hair flew out in the breeze. Down the white road of sandy granite we went, swinging from side to side to avoid the rough stones. At first we seemed on a level with the lower hilltops and the sun still shone about us, then quickly we sank into the valley. Dark shadows rose up to meet us; then the sunshine was left behind and the silence of the evening was around us, only broken by the crunch of the bicycle wheels on the road. We did not speak or make any attempt to express ourselves, but so happy were we that the years have not dimmed the memory of that moment of almost perfect delight.

From now on we began to find ourselves in an enchanted

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world. Nothing was there to mar our joy, no physical desire beset us, no tension or worry clouded our minds. We did not swear eternal troth and think to meet again when we were older, or do any of the things that children are supposed to do by the grown-up writers of children's stories. I remember setting out with her in the rain one day and wandering down the valley hand in hand, and how I kissed her cheek all wet with rain; how we laughed and scampered through the wet mossy wood and came out upon the old ruined monastery in the circle of trees by the river, and how we played there, forgetting all the world. We wandered in and out of the ruins, climbed up the walls, and crossed the old Norman arch that still spans the chancel, then climbed down again and stood together gazing through the round arched east window at the trees beyond softly stirring in the breeze.

Suddenly our elders appeared in the distance, calling. The time! We had forgotten time; forgotten the rain. Now we looked at ourselves; we were soaked through. They were angry, and said things about our having no *business* to wander off like that; didn't we know how worried *they'd* be, and that we were sure to die of *colds*. While we said we were sorry, we looked at each other, and having no words to explain we said no more. They sent Miriam to bed early, and seemed surprised how little affected she appeared by the disgrace.

In the morning the sun was shining into my window when I awoke and the noise of the river filled the room; I got up completely happy.

Then Miriam went away; she had kissed me so sweetly

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the night before. For an hour before the mail car left we sat on a rock in the field above the hotel looking down on the round tower and beyond across the lakes. We held hands tightly and were very silent, the thought of the parting hurting more and more every moment. . . .

She had gone. I tried not to show how much it hurt, and I filled my mouth with the sheets to prevent my brother hearing my sobs that night. Then we left Glendalough and went to Lough Dan, and she wrote me a few sweet letters in a baby hand from England. Three altogether she wrote, for I counted them again the other day to make sure.

. . . . .

The teaching at the school in those days may have been unusual, but I shall always be glad I went there for one reason, the Rugby football. For it was at Aravon, at the age of nine, that I was first introduced to the great game, in playing which I have lived more vividly, perhaps, than at any other time in my life.

I can still remember clearly my first game. I can visualize the black jersey with its yellow Maltese cross and recall its smell as I slipped it over my head. It was an autumn day, the wind blowing from the west out of the glens of Wicklow, moist and soft and full of the smell of wet leaves. The sky was cloudy. The ground was a somewhat sloping field at the foot of Bray Head. I remember next how I stood on the touch-line watching the junior game. A master explained the principles, telling me that the game of Rugby football is played by two teams of fifteen, of

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which eight form the scrum or forwards, and seven the backs, that it is the function of the forwards to battle their way through the centre of their opponents in a body, while the backs run singly when the ball is passed back to them. The ball can be carried in the arms, kicked ahead or dribbled along the ground, the ultimate object being to carry the ball over the opposing goal line and touch it down or kick it over the cross bar. With this scant instruction I was sent out to play. Immediately I stepped into my element as if born to the game. Soon the ball was in my hands and I was running with it. When the game was over the master came up to me and told me that some day I should become an International and play for Ireland. Then and there I was promoted to the senior game.

I never forgot this moment, and when, fifteen years later, the prophecy came true and I got my Irish International cap, my first action was to wire the news to the little old man. Since then he has told the story over and over again in the local golf club to anyone who will listen.

By my second year at the school I was playing for the Fifteen. Matches with other schools became a great thrill as time went on, lighting up the day before and the morning of the match with the excitement of anticipation. There was the train journey, sometimes into Dublin, the meeting with the other team, the glory of the game, and the ecstasy of eating a big tea afterwards. I think few people realize the immense pleasure growing boys obtain from filling themselves up with food. It is the only time in life when the actual capacity of the stomach is the sole legitimate limit.

More exciting than these contests of our own, more im-

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portant than any other event in the year, were the International Football Matches at Lansdowne Road, to which we were always allowed to go. Here we saw fifteen men in green jerseys battling with fifteen men in white or red or blue (England, Wales and Scotland) and became one with the huge crowd of our fellow countrymen who had lost their masks and forgotten their labels and for the moment had but one desire—to see Ireland triumphant—Unionists and Nationalists, Ulstermen and Munstermen, Catholics and Protestants, unathletic intellectuals, who had been brought protesting by their families, all become affected alike. We all yelled “Ireland!” till our throats only emitted a croak. If the other side crossed our line we clapped miserably because we had been taught to be sporting, but if Ireland scored we went mad. We stood up and yelled and yelled and yelled, all restraint gone.

The great players of the day were our gods, our greatest worldly ambition was to be accounted worthy to wear the green jersey with the embroidered shamrock on its breast.

. . . . .

On reaching thirteen it was decided to send us to school in England. Our elder brother had been at Rugby School which ranks with Eton, Harrow and Winchester as one of the four most famous so called English public schools (why these schools are called “public” nobody knows. Actually they are the most private type of school imaginable being reserved for the upper classes almost exclusively).

So, after some discussion, Rugby was chosen for us also.



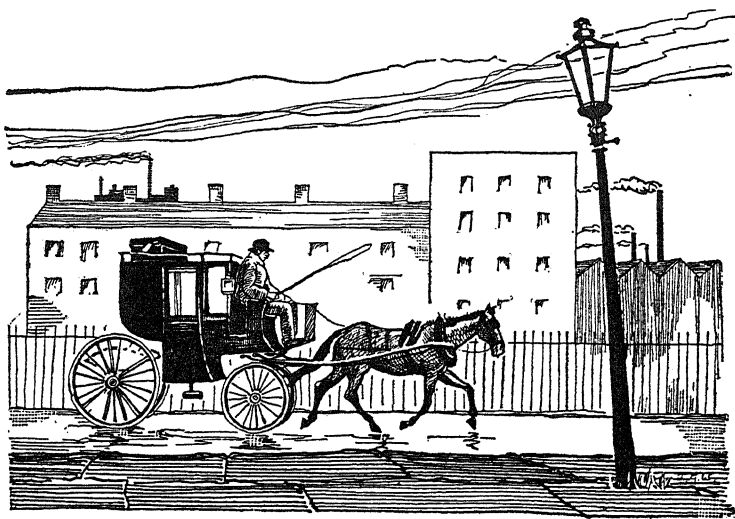
## CHILDHOOD

However, before becoming members of this famous institution it was necessary to pass the entrance examination. This was no simple task for us in the circumstances. The headmaster, after looking through my papers, took a very gloomy view. He said I had ruined my chances by my spelling and disgraced his school by upsetting my inkpot over the map of England. Notwithstanding these inauspicious forecasts the authorities accepted us both, howbeit, very near the bottom of the list; and so in January 1914 we bade farewell to the hills of Ireland for the first time and set forth to learn the art of becoming English public-school boys in an industrial town in the Midlands of England. From now on our life was to be utterly changed. England became our habitation, and we saw Ireland only at holiday times, which became shorter and shorter as the years went on.



## *PART TWO*





## CHAPTER II

### *Rugby School*

**J**ANUARY is the worst month of the year to arrive anywhere for the first time in these islands, and to this rule Rugby is no exception. The modern town was built during the worst part of the industrial revolution, and has merely expanded along similar lines since. Its houses and streets are devoid of any particular architecture or distinction, red brick of a peculiarly uninteresting kind being the predominant note.

Over the Midlands of England hangs a perpetual haze which in winter adds to the drab ugliness of such towns as

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Rugby and Northampton. In most cities by looking up at the sky it is possible to escape from the feeling of disillusionment which red brick rows of houses and drab streets impart. Not so here, for a cloud of misty smoke shuts in the streets as if with a covering of grey canvas.

We arrived on a dull, damp, cold day when the sky, the roads, the fields, and even the people looked grey. The huge railway station is situated some way from the school, and in spite of our excitement and alarm at the prospect of having to face a new and frightening way of life the atmosphere of the place made itself felt, and our hearts sank as we looked out of the cab window upon rows of drab houses and slushy streets. We had not long, however, to meditate upon the town's external appearances. The growler soon drew up at a house in the Hillmorton Road, and we descended and entered Mr. Cole's small waiting house.

Mr. Cole is one of Rugby's famous characters about whom innumerable stories, mostly quite untrue, are told in a lisping voice in an endeavour to imitate his distinctive mode of speech. He has a huge nose set on a thin, somewhat gaunt face, softened by a pair of mild eyes inclined to blink at you through pince-nez balanced high on the bridge. It is not unnatural then that he should be known to successive generations of Rugbians as "Beaky," or that in his younger days he was often likened in caricature to some strange bird. He was a classical scholar and would sometimes remind us that he was up at Balliol with Asquith. He has a phenomenal memory, and is still able to recall the names of all the boys who have played for the

## RUGBY SCHOOL

school during the last twenty years and the score in the matches in which they played.

From the first he regarded my brother and me with suspicion. About a fortnight after the commencement of the term, on entering the dormitory one night after lights out, he demanded of my brother if he were talking.

"No, sir," was the reply. "I was only speaking to my brother."

Mr. Cole paused for a moment, not knowing quite how to take this reply. Certainly it was not a genuine English answer, but perhaps there was a difference between "talking" and "speaking to your brother." He wanted to be fair, and retired grumbling to himself. A couple of nights later, however, on asking my brother if he were "ragging," he received the reply (spoken with a slight lisp):

"No, sir, I was only throwing a sponge at my brother."

Mr. Cole now became more certain, and removing a slipper applied it to my brother's hindquarters with no mean skill.

As members of a "small house" we were classified in the school as "Town"; that is to say, we belonged to the much despised Town House, which was made up of day boys and "foundationers." These belonged to what is known in England as the lower middle classes. The Town House was looked down upon—partly for snobbish reasons, and partly because, owing to its small numbers, it made no showing at games.

Shortly after the commencement of the term, I found myself selected to play for the Town 2nd House Fifteen. Curiously enough the match turned out to be one of the

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most remarkable in my whole football career, thanks to four Tibetans who formed a large part of our side.

It was only February of the year 1914. The world's values were pre-war, and men had not begun to doubt the accepted precepts of the previous age. So it was one morning in Lhasa of the Mongolians that the Dalai Lama got an idea. Whether some rumour had come across the Great Gobian Desert, or whether, while meditating on Kama and the great OM., heaven had vouchsafed to him a message, we never heard. Certain it is, however, that he decided that Tibet needed the English public-school spirit. So he called together the other lesser lamas, nobles, and common Tartars, and informed them that it was his will that four of the most promising boys should be sent forthwith to Rugby School. Curious as it may seem, there were no volunteers. Piqued by this apparent lack of enthusiasm for his ideas, he there and then selected four good lads and informed them that they must start at once or have their heads cut off. So, after many adventures and perils by camel, pony, train, and ship, Gongkar, Möndo, Kyipup, and Ringang arrived at Rugby School having acquired a certain knowledge of English and some of the necessary conventions of European life *en route*.

Lest the full rigours of a public-school life should seem too strange at first, they were placed temporarily under the protection and in the house of an assistant master, and classified in the School as "Town." And so one wet, cold, windy February day in 1914 the Town House 2nd Fifteen took the field, reinforced by Möndo, Kyipup, Gongkar, and Ringang.



## RUGBY SCHOOL

Ringang grasped the main principles fairly soon and, like William Webb Ellis (the originator of the game) took the ball and ran with it whenever the opportunity presented itself to him, though it must be admitted such moments usually occurred after the whistle had blown. Judged by English public-school standards the behaviour during the match of Möndo and Kyipup was abominable. They would not get into the scrum properly, and their enormous bottoms prevented the rest of us from doing so. As the game progressed they received a number of more or less violent biffs, both from before and behind, which, I am sorry to say, they took in quite the wrong spirit and became embittered, showed a tendency to bite, and other nasty traits unexpected in good Buddhists. Gongkar, being of slighter build, had been placed amongst the backs. Here he wandered about miserably like a lost soul, shivering. I ran up and down the field the whole afternoon tackling people—including occasionally Ringang, who was apt to run strongly in the wrong direction—till our opponents had piled up 35 points to *nil*, when, as is the Rugby School tradition, the game ended.

Ringang was definitely a boy, but we were always doubtful as to whether Gongkar, Möndo, and Kyipup should thus be termed, except in so far as it is the custom of the English ruling classes to call all coloured people boys. Certainly their development, as seen in the tosh room, suggested otherwise. Gongkar had a pockmarked face and looked as old as the hills. He never really caught on to what was happening around him. Eventually they made him an artillery officer and he died of pneumonia.

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Möndo and Kyipup were inscrutable. From the beginning they were a problem in the School. They looked out at life through slit-like eyes in which occasionally could be observed an unmistakable twinkle. A broad smile never left their flat yellow faces, and nobody ever knew what they thought. The authorities having decided that they were to be treated like other boys, gallant efforts were made to teach them English history and French grammar, but without the slightest success. I remember one occasion when we were being taught French pronunciation by an ex-Cambridge athlete. The method consisted in our saying "ou," "en," "in," etc., in unison. It was soon noticed that Kyipup was not trying.

"Why don't you say 'ou,' Kyipup?"

"Ar."

"No, I said 'ou.'"

"Ar."

"No, 'ou.'"

Kyipup smiled broadly. The master became heated and shouted "ou" several times. Kyipup continued to smile, till suddenly he received a kick on his behind, which tended to protrude beyond the edge of the bench. The master had been a good place-kick in his day and Kyipup was slightly lifted from the form. His smile remained, but his slit-like eyes lost their twinkle and became definitely sinister.

Ringang was a great contrast to the others and took to English public-school life as to something quite natural to him. He learned quickly and well, becoming a mathematician and also playing for the School House at football. In fact he fully justified the Dalai Lama's confidence and

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in time became an old Rugbian immensely proud of his tie. Unfortunately for himself he had to go back eventually to the uplands of Central Asia. By this time the world war was over and the machine age had established its rule over the world. Ringang, now not only an old Rugbian but one with a "mission," decided that the time had come to get a move on in Mongolia, and so he set out for home across the Himalayan Mountains with a train containing machinery and other tools of the new age. What happened when he reached Tibet is not altogether clear. One rumour had it that on emerging from the mountain passes he was met by some purists of his own race who, refusing to believe that God had changed, cut off his head and threw the machinery into a gorge. Another that he reached Lhasa successfully and got into high favour at once by presenting the Dalai Lama with an Austin Seven.

As the rumours regarding the doings of Mōndo and Kyipup are equally contradictory, I give below a letter I received recently on the subject from the master under whose protection they were placed while in the School.

DEAR COLLIS,

*The story that Ringang was murdered while convoying electrical gear through the mountain pass into Tibet was entirely false. I have heard of him two or three times since then from men back from India, and I have seen newspaper articles within the last year or two which gave him credit for having installed electricity at Lhasa. He was some three years younger than the others, and therefore had a better chance of profiting from his time in this country, as he*

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certainly did. Apart from that, he was far the most intelligent.

Möndo, after being apprenticed to a coal mine in Yorkshire, and after studying at the School of Mines, Camborne, returned to Tibet and began to prospect for minerals; but he had no proper backing—the local officials refused to help and told him to go into the next man's district—and I believe he has given it all up and is getting on with the business of becoming a monk.

Kyipup was the worst of the bunch. The others decided that he was to learn about surveying and map-making; he himself did not want to learn about anything! So he was put under instruction through the Royal Geographical Society, and eventually went out. I once saw a photograph of him with some Englishmen, in connection with getting the telephone through to Lhasa; and I believe he was mentioned in Montgomery McGovern's book about his expedition to Tibet.

Gongkar trained in the war time with an East Yorkshire Regiment, then with some Artillery in Durham, but was not allowed to go to the Front, though he wished to do so. He was sent back to India to go on with his military training, but died, I think, of Diphtheria or Typhoid.

I remain,

Yours sincerely,

F. W. O.

The only distinctive feature of that first term in Mr. Cole's small house that I can recall was its apparent length. Time moved more slowly during January, February, and

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March of that year than at any other time in my life. The sky was always grey, the red brick houses became more ugly the better we got to know them. We counted the days and calculated the hours till we should be free again, but the end of the term always seemed immeasurably far off.

I spent a good deal of my time in the Sanatorium, suffering from acute infectious colds. Here it was possible to escape from the normal school code which shut us in on all sides.

At Rugby there were a hundred small rules for the new boy. He must not put his hands in his pockets, he must not stand about in the quads, he must only use certain lavatories, etc. There was no active bullying, but rather an aloofness on the part of the other boys combined with an insistence on these petty regulations. In the Sanatorium, however, I was able to escape from this atmosphere of repression. Here I met boys of all ages who were friendly. They used to come and sit on my bed and make me talk about Ireland, pulling my leg in a kindly way, though I was large, rather spotty, and unattractive at that time. Years later I reminded one of them of these days, much to his surprise, when he had returned to Cambridge after the war and I gave him a trial for the University Fifteen.

I did not always find the Sanatorium a refuge, however. On one occasion I was put in solitary confinement for refusing to take a second dose of medicine which had already made me sick. I tried to explain, but nobody listened. I was placed in a room by myself without books. I don't think I have ever been more lonely or desolate. The room

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was white-washed, the only variation in its contour being a white-washed ventilator. It looked out on a foul red-brick shed. I lay and coughed and coughed. Time stopped. Then they came in and stood over me till I drank the nauseating mixture. At first I refused, then I broke down and wept, hating them passionately for standing there and watching me in my weakness.

Almost suddenly the end came at last, and we found ourselves in the Irish Mail rushing westwards towards home. Next morning, tired, unwashed, with the stale feeling that a long night journey always imparts, we staggered off the mail boat, carrying our heavy handbags, and set out by the local Dublin South-Eastern Railway train for Killiney. The line on leaving Kingstown runs between embankments which shut out the view and shut in the noise. Here the most wonderful transformation is enacted many times a day. As far as Dalkey the train is a very ordinary, dirty, smelly, and altogether dismal means of transport. The people in it are drab and uninteresting. Suddenly it runs into the Dalkey tunnel; all is darkness for a minute; then it emerges into daylight again—but not the same train. Brilliant sunshine sparkling on the waters of Killiney Bay far below, the Vale of Shanganagh, and behind, the Wicklow mountains rolling softly towards the sky, confront the blinking occupants of the railway compartments. No longer are the passengers ugly and dull. All are ennobled, and now look at each other with sparkling eyes and smiling faces. So it was that early April morning in 1914, but to us it was different from any time before. Suddenly our eyes were opened, and for the first time we really saw the glory

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of that view. The tiredness fell from our bodies and was replaced by a sense of delight. We got out of the train at Killiney station and walked home by the sea, taking in mouthfuls of the fresh morning air, walking with our heads held high, and greeting every familiar object with joy. When we reached Kilmore we found the daffodils and the red rhododendrons in bloom, and the garden full of the scent of flowers.

. . . . .

The next term we entered Mr. Dickenson's House and took our places properly in the School. The first day we arrived very late, after lights-out, and were escorted by the matron, carrying a candle, to a dormitory whose other occupants were already asleep. There we were left to undress in the dark and get into bed without further explanation. We awoke the following morning into a terrifying world. A clanging bell sounded; immediately the other boys leapt out of bed, tore off their pyjamas, and rushed naked out of the room, returning rubbing themselves with towels. Neither of us knew where we were nor what to do. All had been darkness the night before; we had never even seen the room; we didn't know any of the other boys by sight, and being in England of course nobody said anything to us. We were left alone. Horribly frightened, we set out to look for the bathroom. All this nakedness was very unusual. We didn't take off our pyjamas, our last line of defence. Arrived at the bathroom, however, we found our raiment very conspicuous and

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quickly discarded it. The next problem was how to dry ourselves, as we had no towels. Then we couldn't find our clothes. Another bell rang.

"That's 'co,'" somebody said; "if you're late you'll be beaten, you know." We hurried after the others. Catching up with a small boy who looked reasonably kind we asked brokenly where we were going. He explained as we ran along a dark corridor that there was a House call-over before first lesson, which was taken by a member of the Sixth, who beat you if you were late. We arrived just in time.

This term was, if anything, worse than the first. True, with the coming of the leaves the School Close had a new dignity and a peace of its own, with its tall elm trees and old buildings, but the red brick houses of Rugby town were uglier and harder to bear in the sunshine. Now, also, a new set of regulations connected with the House was added to those of the School, and we lived in continual fear of breaking one of them unexpectedly and getting beaten in the dormitory with camp canes by the Sixth. Being no good at cricket we had no standing in the House, and our lack of acquaintance with the names and deeds of the English county cricketers made our fellow fags regard us suspiciously. It was probably this latter fact which made me read the news items in the newspapers, though my twin brother tells me that I was horribly precocious in this matter, and that even he regarded this activity of mine at the time as unsound and annoying.

One of the hardest things to bear in school life is the lack of privacy. To eat, sleep, and live together, be taught in communal classrooms and defæcate in privies without



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doors becomes a torture to any in whom the herd instinct is not strongly developed. At Rugby School at least they supplied us with tiny studies, one of which I shared with my brother, and held, as a fortress, against the unkind world around. Into this refuge I used to bring the papers and read with excitement each day the progress of the Irish Question, which was just then in the forefront of the news. I watched the development of the dispute between the North and the South, the Liberals and the Conservatives, and even made up my mind on the rights and wrongs of the case. I looked forward to the coming civil war with anticipatory pleasure, and hoped that I should find a way to aid the South myself.

One evening in late July, when I was leaving the cricket nets in the Close about a quarter to seven, a paper boy appeared crying "Stop Press." It was a still, sunny evening; the scene was typically English: tall elm trees, playing-fields, boys in flannels, the noise of cricket balls being struck, boys' voices, the old buildings behind. I bought a paper, as was my wont.

"Any news?" another small boy called.

"Austria has declared war," I read out.

"No, you fool, not that! Has Surrey beaten Kent?" He pulled the paper out of my hands and searched it for the news he wanted and handed it back satisfied. He was not destined for county cricket, however.

Next day we went home to Ireland. There was a different excitement from what I had imagined. The civil war was declared "off," and Irishmen, North and South, were soon rushing to join the British Army and defend Belgium, their

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differences apparently completely forgotten. At once I, like the rest of the youth of the world, was madly partisan in the new conflict. I believed everything I was told about German atrocities and the purity of the Allies. I hated the Germans, and prayed for victory for our side.

. . . . .

The following term we came back to a very altered School. All the older boys and most of the younger masters had left. There was a new air about the place. Indeed, the School passed through a unique period during the next four years. That the teaching deteriorated and the school life became somewhat irregular, as the reader may find, is not to be wondered at. Indeed, the really remarkable thing was that school life was maintained at all during that frightful period when the generation of boys immediately ahead of us was almost completely annihilated.

The Officers' Training Corps now took on a new importance in school life. Before the war the O.T.C. was voluntary. Indeed, as many anti-militarists have often pointed out, it is one of the curious results of the war to end war, that O.T.C.'s have been compulsory in all public schools ever since. These people need not worry, however, because no English O.T.C. ever made anybody militaristic or taught him anything about modern war. Indeed, the whole business from "advancing in short rushes" to "moving to the right in column of sections" is merely so much waste of time. The real trouble is that it is yet another method of making the public-school boy into a type. Drill is part of

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the training of all armies, because it breaks down individualism and makes men into a herd, the individuals of which will allow somebody else to think for and lead them, if necessary, to their destruction.

The younger masters, who were married or had other ties which made them hesitate to join up at first, and the middle-aged men who were just too old for active service, donned khaki and started to prepare *us* for "the great sacrifice." Large numbers of army manuals were secured, and the tactics of the South African War studied. Discipline was stiffened up at once. Drill became a patriotic duty. Small boys who dropped their rifles on parade, or whose puttees slipped down were beaten by bigger boys.

My twin brother and I fared badly from the start. I disgraced the whole School when my puttees gradually slipped down, exposing the skin of the leg during a route march through the town in aid of recruiting. Right up to our last term my brother and I were always being reduced to the ranks for one thing or another. I hated being drilled; I never succeeded in making my mind sufficiently blank to enable me to obey orders shouted from a distance. After a time my thoughts would always wander off, and I would find myself proceeding in one direction while the rest of the platoon had turned about and was marching in the other. As a small boy I had a very bad time, and only my prowess at "rugger" saved me later. Field-days I enjoyed, however. I was always sent off as a scout, partly because I was rather a good scout, and partly so as to remove my demoralizing influence from the platoon. On one of these occasions I captured the headmaster of another famous

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school when he was in command of his forces. I had made my way successfully through the enemy's lines and hidden myself in a wood close by their headquarters. As I peered out of the bushes I saw a stout gentleman wheeling a bicycle along a path a few feet away. His Sam Brown belt met with some difficulty across his stomach, and he was sweating.

In a flash I recognized the opposing commander-in-chief. I sprang from my hiding-place, and in the husky voice of adolescence called upon him to surrender. He was large, dressed as a major; I was a small boy, a private. I wasn't very confident. Perhaps my voice shook. He turned, balanced his bicycle on a stone, came towards me threateningly, and demanded who the hell I thought I was. I felt things were going wrong. This was not the way to allow oneself to be treated by an enemy. He advanced upon me still farther. Desperately now, I "fixed bayonets" and presented the point at the most protuberant portion of his stomach. He halted, went red in the face, and began to use words I'd never heard before. "Sir," I said, "if you won't come quietly I'll have to shoot you." As he used another, even more unusual, word, I pulled the trigger and shot him with a blank in the stomach. He retreated. The noise of the explosion had put some heart into me, so I advanced, knocked over his bicycle with the butt-end of my rifle, and fired at him again. He retired, roaring for help.

"Mind now, you're dead," I called after him as I slipped back into the wood and disappeared.

In spite of the war and all the changes it had already brought and was to bring to the school life, this was the

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“rugger” term at Rugby School, and Rugby football was still the most important item in our lives. It mattered more to us whether we won the Cock House Match than whether the Germans captured Paris.

From the moment of the first House game my whole position in the School changed. In it I laid out three of my most violent persecutors and scored three times. After the game the captain of the House took me into his study and first explained to me that such savagery was not considered “the game” in England, and then, with a grin, went on to discuss with me the position I should occupy in the House Fifteen. Almost at once I became a person in the “rugger” hierarchy of the School. When I was fifteen I obtained my School Fifteen Colours. This was an immense honour, not only for me but for the House, as I was its only representative in the Fifteen at the time. In the House a very definite ritual was accorded me. I was given what was called “Hall Cheering.” On retiring from late school I went quietly to my study and waited. Meanwhile the whole House gathered in Hall, bringing tin baths and other noisy instruments with them. When all was ready the House captain came to my study and led me into Hall amid cheering and beating of baths with wire toasting-forks and breaking of crockery. My place in Hall was changed to that next the Sixth—prefects at Rugby—and I was given all privileges, without the responsibilities of Sixth power. Now I was immune from beatings and could do what I liked. All petty repressive rules were removed and I was free. I could remain in Hall after tea with the Sixth when Karminski, a Polish boy of great musical talent, used to entertain us. He was a

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huge, ungainly creature with enormous feet and beautiful hands. Though unable to play games, owing to a weak heart, he was not despised as were other such unfortunates, but, on account of his musical ability and something aloof in his manner, he was respected and affectionately called "The Horse." He was usually asked to perform on the battered Hall piano towards the end of tea. He would play any of the popular tunes of the day, improvise, or give us compositions of his own, while we sat round and talked or listened.

The two next best players in the House became my fast friends. One was Rodger, a fiery Scot with a violent temper which used to blaze out uncontrollably, but who never was known to beat a small boy during the year and a half that he held Sixth power; the other, Barber, was a slow north-country boy with a heart of gold. They were both older than I and became my sponsors into this new society. Everybody called me "Bob" or "Hippo." I was very happy, for not only had I these friendships, but also with boys of my own age or younger, with whom I was able to share my privileges to some extent. I tried very hard to imitate those about me and to act as they did, though I admit I pulled the House platoon sergeant, a tall, lanky youth with an enormous cranium, known as "pin-head," down two flights of wooden splintery stairs, in revenge for having beaten me some weeks before for failing to go through the motions of "three rounds rapid" when at field exercises. Indeed, at the end of the Lent term, 1916, I was so happy and so completely part of the place that I was almost sorry to leave my friends and go home.

## CHAPTER III

### *Easter 1916*

**E**ASTER 1916, as all Irishmen remember, was the finest spring the country has ever known. For two weeks the sun shone with the warmth of summer, and the flowers seemed to spring out of the ground. Almost over-night the world was re-born.

On Easter Monday my two sisters, my twin brother and I set off to the Meeting of the Waters in Wicklow and picnicked by the spot which Tom Moore had immortalized in song. There we spent a long day by the brown sparkling rivers whose banks were decked with early primroses, wild anemones, and all manner of ferns, travelling home at last by the mail train. At Greystones there was an unaccountable halt of an hour. Nobody appeared to know why the train had stopped. We grew impatient in our crowded compartment. There were angry words between a gentleman in a fur coat from England and a drunken Irish-American who wanted to sit on his knee. Then suddenly a crowded train drew in from the opposite direction. Its occupants appeared to be in a state of great excitement. They leant out of the windows and shouted to us that Dublin was

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ablaze, the Castle taken, and the English driven out of the country. Our train now went on again, but once more stopped about three miles from Killiney. So we got out and walked home along the line by the sea, while my sister and I argued the rights and wrongs of the issue. Neither of us knew exactly what had happened, but we had gathered, generally, from the occupants of the other train that some sort of a rising by the Sinn Feiners had taken place. We became heated. I, being completely pro-Allies or anti-German, said that whatever the cause this was not the time for it; she, that we were Irish and that therefore they were our side.

Next day immediately after breakfast I took out my bicycle and rode into Dublin to find out what was happening. I met nothing unusual till I reached the outskirts of the city at Ballsbridge. Here I noticed houses with mattresses and sandbags around their windows, but people were moving about the road without hinderance and all seemed quiet. I rode on into the city only noticing a number of wires down, and some signs of disorder at Mount Street Bridge over the canal which bounds the city on the south. I reached the centre of Dublin, College Green, and bought a paper from a boy, it consisted merely of one sheet which stated that a rising by Sinn Feiners had taken place but that the situation was "well in hand." As I handed a penny to the paper boy a sudden volley rang out from behind me. I dropped the paper and turned round quickly. Protruding from the windows of Trinity College I saw a row of rifle muzzles. Another volley was fired and was answered by a number of shots from the roof of the Bank of Ireland (Grattan's old Parliament House) across the



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street. All the bullets went high above my head but the noise was terrifying. I had never experienced rifle fire before and I moved off quickly though quite a number of spectators remained to watch the battle.

I wandered up and down several streets meeting few people. Occasionally I asked what was happening. Nobody seemed to know exactly though it appeared that the insurgents had seized most of the principal buildings in the city, though so far only desultory fighting had occurred with the British forces. Somebody told me that the Sinn Feiners were intrenched in Stephen's Green and that there had been fighting there. So I decided to go home that way and see for myself. As I came round the corner into the Green I stopped suddenly, seeing before me a dead horse, lying half on and half off the pavement, and the road covered with pools of blood; there were several stranded tram-cars further down the road, their windows showing numerous bullet holes. There was a rough barricade across the street but nobody behind it. Nor was anybody to be seen, either in the Green or elsewhere. Absolute stillness, that could be felt, permeated the scene. I felt a silent threat hanging in the air around me. As I turned away, frightened, I noticed that my bicycle wheels dyed the road red for a short distance.

The next day I went down to Kingstown, Dublin's naval harbour. It was a scene of great activity. In the harbour and outside in the roads lay British men-of-war and transports. The quays were crowded with soldiers in full battle order; guns were being disembarked and troops lined up. I looked at the long grey iron hulls of the warships, their massive

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guns and armour, saw the soldiers swarming ashore and thought of the poor little barricades I had passed in Dublin.—A few Irishmen armed with rifles had gone out to fight against a modern army with all its machine guns, cannons and resources. A few thousand Sinn Feiners had challenged the might of England.

A column now moved off in the direction of Dublin. I rode along beside it on my bicycle. I was only a boy, nobody seemed to mind. But after a time I remembered what I had seen at Ballsbridge and some instinct of self-preservation prompted me to leave the column and enter Dublin by another route.

As I reached the outskirts of the city there was a sudden wild burst of firing from the direction of Ballsbridge followed by all the sounds of desperate street fighting. Later I learned that the column had been ambushed at Ballsbridge and lost two hundred men in the desperate battle which followed, and that the leader of the Irish forces there was called De Valera.

Now I went into a shop and bought a red cross armlet, put it on and appointed myself an ambulance man, and thereafter helped the wounded in the streets or assisted in any way I could in the hospitals. Every day the fighting grew fiercer. I saw the hospitals crowded with dead, and groaning wounded. I saw men shot down in the streets, rise, stagger on and fall again. Soon the reverberating explosions of artillery were added to the terrifying noises of machine gun and rifle fire in the streets. At night the red glow of the burning buildings, reflected against the cloud of smoke which hung over the city, appeared like a false

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sunset. I looked at a familiar street whose prominent objects were almost part of my subconscious mind, and saw them burning or tumbling down. The senses could not convey the horror of the scenes. They became numb.

The end was inevitable, from the start the insurgents had no chance, they were outnumbered ten to one, without artillery they could only hold out till the houses they had barricaded were battered down or set on fire. Soon the British had forced their way into the city, fighting fiercely, and a dozen battles were raging, each rebel leader holding out in his own district. The Irish headquarters was in the General Post Office on the North side of the city in O'Connell Street. Here on the first day of the fighting a ludicrous incident occurred. A regiment of British Lancers formed up at the end of the street and then charged down it to the Post Office. As they lined up they made a fine showing and quite a crowd gathered round admiring their horses. Charging a barricaded building on horse-back with lances is hardly a modern military manoeuvre and they returned with quite a number of empty saddles. The frightened horses were caught by the Dublin crowd, patted and made much of.

This sort of thing didn't last long however. Soon guns were brought up, and by the end of the week the houses on each side of the street were a battered blazing mass. Desperately the President of the Provisional Government and his officers fought on. At last the Post Office itself was set on fire. Still they fought, blinded with smoke, tired, choking, done.

The O'Rahilly, the cultured gentleman of private means,

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who had opposed the decision for the rising, but who nevertheless had come out to fight because his family always came out to fight for Ireland, died of wounds. At last they could hold the Post Office no longer. Connelly, the labour leader, with a handful of men made a sortie while the others hurriedly evacuated the building. He fell, severely wounded, leading his men but did not die then, but lay in hospital for weeks till they took him out and shot him strapped to an upright stretcher because he could not stand.

The Sunday following was the last day of real fighting. During the afternoon I brought in a note to the Meath Hospital about some wounded and then went down to the hospital gate to see what was happening around. About two hundred yards away I saw a flag flying from the tower above Jacob's Biscuit Factory. It was waving in the breeze; a tri-colour—green, white and orange. I stood silently gazing at it. A haze of brick dust hung in the air, caused by the stream of machine-gun bullets that were striking the tower below it. Now I walked down the back streets towards the factory. As I approached I found that its garrison was evacuating it and escaping into the narrow streets around the Coombe. Some were carrying tins of biscuits, others throwing out sacks of flour from the upper storeys. One of them came up to me with a revolver in his hand, and, pointing to the British Officers' Training Corps badge that I had put in my buttonhole to enable me to pass through the British lines and had forgotten to remove, remarked:

"You're just the sort of lad who gets shot if he doesn't look out, you know."

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At that moment a bag of flour landed on a girl's head, and glad of the diversion I carried her into the hospital.

When I came out again the British had commenced to attack in earnest, and were advancing under a covering machine-gun fire up the streets from the direction of the canal. I saw the last shot fired from the tower—a man appearing for a moment, discharging his rifle, and disappearing again. Close by somebody emptied his revolver at the advancing troops and also retired. Then there were two loud explosions—bombs thrown into the lower storeys of the factory by the storming troops. Then a silence fell. We looked up at the tower; slowly the flag was pulled down. A woman gave a shrill cheer; there was silence again; some strange emotion moved the crowd round the hospital gate; nobody dared look at his companion. Then the noise of firing burst out again and drowned all else.

It was now 6 p. m. In an hour it would be curfew. I decided I must try and get out of the city. I was wearing my Red Cross armlets, but I dared not ride my bicycle, so terrifying were the deserted streets filled with the hum of ricochetting bullets and echoing explosions. As I approached the corner of Camden Street the noises grew louder, and I asked a British sentry, a Dublin Fusilier, who was crouching by a lamp-post, what was happening.

"Them divils are shooting the town up," he said, pointing down the street to where the party who had just stormed Jacob's were returning carrying the captured flags—the tricolour and the old green flag with the harp. They were firing wildly into houses and over roofs, yelling as they came. Several were wounded. They looked so dangerous

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that I thought it wisest to go along with them rather than to walk on alone. They took me into a tobacconist's shop on the corner called Kelly's. An officer told me to dress a wounded arm. I had never seen a wound before at such close quarters and did not appear very useful apparently, because somebody said:

"You're no blinking Red Cross man; you're probably a bloody spy."

"Shut up, Jim," the officer replied. "Can't you see the little ——'s only a kid."

As soon as I could I got away from there and went along Charlemont Street to the bridge. Here I was halted by the sight of three short rifles, pointed at me from a house on the other side of the canal, and a voice which yelled at me to go back. I protested that I had a pass, waving a bit of paper on which was scribbled, "leave to pass in and out." It had been given me by an officer in charge of a patrol which had been blocking the road at Killiney some days before. Then one of the rifles fired and a bullet sang by my head with a crack. I retired hastily again to Kelly's, where I stood in the narrow hall. There was an alarm and all the men in the building were called out into the street, where they gave three rounds rapid, fixed bayonets, and went off yelling down the street. There was a lot of noise and confusion and people rushing in and out. Suddenly a smoke-begrimed soldier with red sore eyes gripped my hand. It was our gardener, who had joined the Dublins.

"Is that you, Master Bob? And are you quite well?" he said and disappeared. I never saw him again.

When the party returned several more were wounded.

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A sailor, who formed one of the group, had been struck on the thigh and was bleeding. I offered to take him into the Meath Hospital.

"Never get there," he said.

There was a nursing-home in Charlemont Street, so we decided to try and get across there. He staggered beside me still carrying his rifle. We reached the steps of the home in safety, though every sniper in the neighbourhood seemed to be firing at us, and I rang the bell and hammered on the knocker in a frenzy, as a bullet knocked out a brick just above my head. At last, after what seemed like eternity, the door opened and we literally fell into the hall and banged the door behind us. There I remained for the night as I had had as much as my nerves could stand for one day. I knew however that if I did not return home my mother would think that I had been killed, so I went to the telephone and said in as grown-up a voice as I could "Important military business," gave my home number, got through and told her I was all right before I was cut off with a bang. I lay on a couch that night but could not sleep. Outside the killing went on, explosions and rifle fire reverberating through the city. Gradually, as the dawn broke the shooting died down.

Early next morning I arose, mounted my bicycle and went back to the Meath Hospital where I obtained a paper stating who I was and that I had been doing Red Cross work, and then set out again for the canal bridge and home. It was a perfect spring morning. As I rode through the empty, silent, sunny streets, the events of the previous week appeared to me like some bad dream, utterly unreal. Then I

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rounded a corner and came upon a dead collie dog lying in the gutter before a house with shattered windows. It lay on its side, its front legs stretched out as if trying to drag its body away, its silky coat matted with clotted blood, its eyes open and glassy. The sight hurt me more than anything else I had seen in all the fighting. It seemed too wanton, too senseless. Why, in God's name, should any man have wanted to shoot a dog at such a time? I wanted to cry.

On reaching the canal bridge once more I was stopped by a sergeant who looked at my papers.

"This won't do," he said; "it says Monday on your pass, and it's Tuesday to-day." The corporal backed me up, however, and said it was Monday. The sergeant told him to keep his place. He murmured something about "That wouldn't make it Tuesday anyway." Then they both lost their tempers. An officer came up. He couldn't remember either what day it was. We were all standing on top of the bridge in a bunch. Suddenly a shot rang out and a bullet sang by. Nobody was hit but we got off the bridge very quickly, and they let me go on without further argument. When I reached home I found that the family had already left for Dublin to look for me. So I lay down in the garden and went to sleep.

The insurrection ceased almost as suddenly as it had begun, and Dublin struggled back to its usual life again; shops opened, the streets were crowded and except for the ruined areas nothing appeared changed. As I walked about the town and gazed at the battle areas I heard everybody about me arguing. Mostly they blamed the insurgents for the destruction and sided, partially at least with the



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British, for many had sons, husbands or fathers fighting for the Allies in Flanders. One day, however, I noticed a different expression on the faces of the people as I entered Grafton Street. I called it "a grey look" in a diary written at the time, though that hardly expresses it. Nobody was smiling, nobody was speaking; their eyes had a strained painful look. A paper boy was calling "Stop Press." I bought a paper and read that Pearse (I had never heard the name before) and a number of the other Irish leaders had been courtmartialled, found guilty of high treason, condemned to death and that the sentence had been carried out that morning. As I hurried on up the street, crumpling the paper in my hand, I remembered suddenly Robert Emmet, Wolf Tone and Lord Edward FitzGerald my own ancestor. Is history repeating itself I wondered as I gazed into the drawn faces of the Dubliners? I felt the tension around me though I did not realize then that I was experiencing one of the most dramatic moments in the history of my country, for Padraig Pearse and his band of poets had made the blood sacrifice, and the destiny of Ireland had been changed.

## CHAPTER IV

### *Rugby Continued*

AT THE AGE OF SIXTEEN one is only half conscious; one does not regard oneself objectively in one's surroundings. Although the events of the Easter holidays had made a profound impression upon my mind and actions, yet when the holidays were over I looked forward eagerly to going back to Rugby, seeing all my friends again, and resuming my place in the House life. After all, my family had all given themselves to the Allied cause; even my father, who was nearly sixty, had spent the previous summer driving an ambulance in the Italian army.

On arriving back at School I was full of the descriptions of the fighting in Dublin, regarding myself as having now first-hand information on modern war. To my surprise I found my popularity had vanished. This was due partly, no doubt, to the fact that this was the cricket term, and the moment for others to be the House heroes; but I soon discovered that the English boys resented my talk, and were inclined to mutter "bloody rebels" when I spoke of Ireland. Further, that they tended to feel that all Irishmen had some responsibility for the happenings in Ireland, and

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to regard any refusal on our part to accept such a position as bad form. Soon, however, such thoughts vanished in the routine of school life and the noise of the guns from France, which now began to overshadow our small existences.

I was at that time a member of a most unpleasant Form. Our Form Master was a pedant of unusual appearance: he had a high forehead but little chin, a thin, clean-shaven face and black hair well plastered down. His method of teaching any subject was to ask innumerable one-word questions on the portion of the lesson for the day. Hence in French and Latin we learned grammar, chiefly irregular verbs, while in Scripture, English, and history our practice was to underline every name and date and then learn these by heart, so as to be able to answer "Grass" when asked what Nebuchadnezzar ate; "Head," to what Anne Boleyn lost, or "Henry V.," to "who went into the breach with his dear friends?" A French boy in the Form was bottom in his own language for the term.

At half-term the middle and lower sections of the School suffered from a curse called "The Grammar Paper." It consisted of an examination in Latin and French grammar and English dates. I succeeded in establishing a new record in the School by getting nought for the whole thing. It was a terrible moment. The master had been reading out the marks proudly, for this was his pet subject, and his Form had so far shown that his efforts had not been wasted. Then he came to my name on the list. There was a pause—nought. He put on his spectacles and scrutinized the paper—nought it was—his face went very red.

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"Nought!" he screamed, his falsetto voice breaking. At this another small boy, being unable to control himself, gave a half-suppressed chuckle. Our enraged master sprang to his feet, his face suffused with red blotches, his long thin nose glowing like hot coal, and rushed down the classroom to the cupboard, making queer noises like a furious tom-cat. It was some time before he could get the key into the lock, so great was his agitation. At last he got it open, whipped out a cane and beat the offending youth up and down the room, lashing him from behind. Suddenly he stopped, a grey ashen look came into his face, all the life seemed to go out of him. He sat down at his desk, covered his head with his arms and remained silent till the end of the lesson, when, glad to get away into the fresh air, we escaped from our too strange instructor. Nothing happened to me.

Most of the other classes were taken by war-substitutes. With these we waged an incessant war, the most dramatic encounter occurring towards the end of this term during an examination in algebra. The master was a big man with a beard, who had been heard to state that he knew how to manage boys. It was a hot summer day, we did not feel like work, least of all like struggling with mathematics. On being handed the paper we found we could neither read the script, so badly was it printed, nor understand even the meaning of the questions, let alone attempt to answer them. Whether we had been given the wrong paper or what had happened we never discovered, for all else was forgotten in the storm which ensued. We began by asking questions in a genuine enough attempt to find out what it

## RUGBY CONTINUED

all meant. However Mr. — felt this was the moment to express his personality, and announced that if anybody else asked a question which didn't appear to be sensible to him he would give the offender fifty lines and double it at each subsequent question.

"Now," he said, "does any one want to ask a question?"

There was no hesitation, the whole Form held up their hands at once. For a moment he was daunted, then he commenced with the top of the Form and worked downwards. By the time he reached my brother and Ionides, the Greek boy, the lines had reached four figures. Grimly now we went to work to see what we could do with the paper. It was no use, the thing was hopeless. My brother was the first to give it up. He threw his papers down on the desk and turning round audibly inquired from Ionides how he was getting on.

"You're cheating, Collis," cried Mr. — furiously. At this I rose from my seat at the other end of the Form, knowing full well, of course, that it was my twin brother who had been addressed, and indignantly denied the accusation, calling heaven to witness that it was a foul calumny and absolutely unjustified. When the master could make himself heard above my loud protestations, he said irritably that he was not speaking to me but to my twin brother.

"It's no matter, sir," I answered, "which Collis you are referring to; it's a lie! We Collises never cheat." The Form echoed: "The Collises never cheat."

"Silence!" he screamed. But we were on our feet and all shouting at once. The examination ended in complete

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chaos, the master's final shot being that all the lines must be done, and Collis minor reported to the Headmaster. He marched out. We looked at each other. This was serious; anything might happen. A council of war was called, and it was rapidly settled that we must get to the Headmaster first. I was elected to lead a delegation at once. With two others I set off, in much perturbation, to beard the Headmaster in his own study. It required great courage, for the Headmaster seemed to us to wield a power almost of life and death, but our cause was desperate. Trembling, we climbed the turret staircase and knocked on the Head's door. As we entered we looked anxiously into his face to see if we had been forestalled. Apparently not, for he appeared glad to see us and asked us to sit down. Then, as leader of the delegation, I told him that we had been set an impossible paper, that the master had refused to answer questions, that he had set ten thousand lines, that my poor little brother was in tears, that we loved our work, and that of all subjects, algebra was the most interesting, etc., etc. The Headmaster twirled his watch chain and regarded us with the greatest friendliness. He said he completely understood; that as a matter of fact the master in question was leaving at the end of the term. He felt perhaps it might have been wiser to act more quietly. Finally he cancelled all the lines, except twenty-five, which my brother must do for answering back. Helping each other to our feet, we backed out of the room rapidly, fell down the stairs, and rejoined our incredulous Form mates in the Close.

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## RUGBY CONTINUED

At first the war had been merely an exciting game to us, portrayed in the papers by maps with black lines representing the armies, and arrows pointing for direction of attacks; and by visiting lecturers, among whom was a famous author, who explained the strategy of the Allies, always assuring us of victory in six months' time. As he put it:

"Other things being equal, numbers prevail."

As time went on, however, the conflict became more personal. Many had fathers and brothers at the front; boys we knew began to appear on the casualty lists. Our beloved House tutor said good-bye to us one Sunday afternoon, and was blown to pieces a few days later. Gradually the shadow crept closer. I remember sitting in the House quad during my last year, with two companions, looking up at an aeroplane stunting high above and wondering where we would be that day next year. Both companions were dead before its anniversary was reached.

Memorial services were now a regular feature of school life. Once or twice a term a special service was given in memory of the boys who fell. Their parents were invited, and usually came. The service was quite simple. The names of the fallen were read out and God was asked to take care of them, and a few prayers were offered for them and for victory. Then an address was given, in which the parents were assured that their sons had fallen fighting bravely in the great cause—the war to end war; in defence of smaller and weaker nations, for the honour of England, for God. The preacher would then turn to us and pray God that we

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also would acquit ourselves with equal valour when the time came.

On one occasion this routine procedure was broken. The preacher, a certain Mr. Simmonds, instead of saying what was expected of him, broke all the rules of the game and actually spoke what he felt. He said that war settled nothing, that it was wrong however you looked at it. He suggested that it was more than probable that somewhere in Germany at that very moment a similar service, attended also by sorrowing mothers and fathers, was being held. He even said that perhaps it was as fine to stand out against the whole foul thing and receive all the calumny of the world, as to die gallantly, like the boys whose deaths we were commemorating that day. Gradually the congregation became restive. Finally a bereaved father got up and stamped out of the School chapel, followed by one or two others.

How dare this chap mention their gallant sons' names in the same breath as Ramsay MacDonald and the other filthy pacifists? I was sitting just below the Headmaster; his face became more agitated as the preacher proceeded; but a pulpit is an unassailable rostrum, and he had to sit and bear it to the end.

The sermon raised a storm of protest among the masters who had not gone to the war, and certain of the parents.

After chapel we went back to our Houses discussing the matter in some excitement. On the whole we agreed with the preacher, but considered it rather bad form on his part to have said it at that particular moment. Also, we felt nobody could expect our fathers to understand such



## RUGBY CONTINUED

a point of view. We being next on the list, so to speak, knew instinctively that most of the war propaganda, such as corpse factories, was false. We were beginning to cease hating the Germans, though our changing attitude made no difference to our future course of action, and all of us automatically went out to fight on reaching the killable age.

Boys ever live in the moment, but at that time we grasped the present utterly and made it our whole; because for us there appeared no gradual attainment of manhood. As soon as we left school the complete responsibility of adult citizenship was to be thrust upon us in the horrible form of a uniform in the army. So our school endeavours were magnified, and we cared more fiercely about our little affairs than any other generation, before or since. I remember one football game which nearly broke our hearts. Rodger, Barber, and I were now the first three forwards in the School Fifteen. It was Barber's and Rodger's last term. We decided, as a fitting end to our companionship, to win the Cock House Match. We had a very uneven team, but we beat it into shape by weeks of careful training. We won the first few House matches easily; in the semi-final we met our only real opponents. The match was played on the old ground in the Close, where Rugby football had first been played. We hung our blazers on the same old elm trees that William Webb Ellis and his companions had hung theirs on, ninety-two years before. We felt the thrill of the game we were about to play, and the aura of all the other matches that had gone before. Now only one thing

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mattered in our lives; all else, past and future, was forgotten. We went out to win.

It was an heroic encounter; Barber crashed over the line for a try first; then a pass was intercepted and they scored. Then I, who had gone out to play wing three-quarter, scored a desperate try by the corner flag—handing off three opponents and finally diving over the full back to ground the ball. We appeared to have the game in hand, our spirits rose, our supporters yelled themselves dumb. Then, suddenly, a minute before time, they dropped a goal. It was too late to rally for another effort; the whistle blew a moment later, and we found ourselves beaten by one point.

Spent and speechless with disappointment, Rodger, Barber, and I walked home together, our faces white and drawn with tiredness and misery. Our whole world seemed shattered. The small boys stared at us; nobody dared speak to us. We went back to our studies and sat dumbly looking at the floor, forgetting even to change out of soaking clothes or to wash.

In a few months Barber was a mangled corpse and Rodger in hospital with shell-shock.

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During my last year and a half in the School not only did the older boys do fifteen hours' military training a week, but farming became a regular feature of school life. During the term we went out and helped the local farmers, and in the holidays formed agricultural camps in different parts of the country. It became a very useful way of escap-

## RUGBY CONTINUED

ing from boring lessons. Indeed, during chemistry classes it was our general principle once a week to go up to the master at half-time and politely mention that the whole Form was needed on the farm, and then march out and disperse.

Towards the end of the summer term an agricultural course was arranged in how to pick up potatoes, for "leading boys" from the public schools, who were later to take charge of "potato encampments" in Devon and Cornwall during the holidays. I was one of the two boys selected from Rugby. We set out towards the end of June and travelled to a little village in Cambridgeshire near Ely, called Prickwillow, where we encamped.

I had never seen the flat Fen country before, and was entranced by the reedy wildness of the dykes, the rich vegetation that sprang from the almost black earth, and the sunsets which turned the whole sky into a blaze of golden light—making the silhouette of the Isle of Ely look like some enchanted fortress.

The camp consisted of a large number of public-school boys drawn from most of the better-known schools, a commandant, and a number of assistants. Among the latter were two gentlemen of peculiar habits. Their life-work appeared to be the seduction of females, and their conversation consisted in flowery and detailed descriptions of how they did it. We called one of them Napoleon, due to his short, thick-set appearance, and the other Beelzebub, due to his face. They hunted as a pair, so they told us, Napoleon making the pace and Beelzebub coming in at the correct moment, not far behind. Napoleon was quite popular dur-

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ing the daytime, but Beelzebub was universally disliked, being suspected of class consciousness.

The work of raising potatoes was extremely arduous. Up and down the row went the spinner, drawn by two superb horses, shooting out the potatoes on to the dark earth. It was our duty to pick them up rapidly, sorting them into bags the while. Invariably the spinner would be round on us again before we had quite finished our sector. At the beginning the strain was very great; our backs ached and our hands grew blistered. However, after the first couple of days the work became most enjoyable; for there is no greater happiness in the world than, having worked all day long in good mother earth, to strip and swim in a warm dyke and then to rest in the cool of the evening, the body glowing with health and full of sunshine.

On the last day of camp the commandant took us shooting. He lent a couple of guns to two boys, and the rest of us spread out as beaters through the fields.

It was a beautiful day, warm yet tempered by a breeze which blew the corn in waves across the fields. It was good to be alive. Suddenly a hare got up; the C.O. fired. There was a screech like a child's cry; the wounded creature dragged itself off on three legs, its fourth hanging useless. We were on it, quickly surrounding it. It couldn't get away, partly because it was wounded and partly because it was heavy with pregnancy. There was a tear in its side, its guts were bulging through.

"Kill it, somebody." I was the nearest to the animal. I took a step forward. I didn't know what to do. I wanted to kneel down and try and heal it. I looked about for some

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way of escape. We were surrounded. A big boy brushed by me, seized the hare, and beat it to death with a zinc water-bottle, while it screamed and screamed—then there was silence. The C.O. came up, picked up the mangled body with its protruding glassy eyes, and put it in his bag.

I felt suddenly sick and weak, unutterably tired; the sun still shone, the wind still blew the corn, but the light had died and all beauty seemed to have gone out of the world. I walked back miserably to camp with a boy from Winchester. "Didn't suppose you'd mind," he said; "you look the hefty 'sportin'' type."

That night we had a final sing-song, to which the village boys and girls were invited. We all sat close in the big marquee. The girls were very friendly, so when "Auld Lang Syne" had been sung the "boy with the water-bottle" and another youth took two of the girls into a dry ditch—later boasting of their prowess as men. Indeed, the more innocent of us obtained considerable knowledge on such matters from the conversation of these two young gentlemen with Napoleon and Beelzebub. This last affair, however, was too much, and we decided to throw the lot of them into a wet dyke. But they could not be found at the moment when action was planned, and the camp terminated without violence, which was fortunate, perhaps, as Beelzebub couldn't swim.

Next day we separated and returned to our respective schools. While waiting for an hour and a half in Ely for a train we had a final addition to our education however—Napoleon and Beelzebub giving a demonstration in seduction.

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After this course I was considered a "Spud expert," and as such was put in a position of authority during the summer in a camp arranged to assist the Cornish farmers to raise their potato crop.

As luck would have it, it rained most of the time. We took over a camp at Liskeard which had been pitched on the windward side of a hill. During the first night most of the tents blew over and we were forced to cling, clad only in pyjamas, to the guy-ropes of the marquee to prevent it from being blown away, while the rain came down in torrents. Next day, after much haughty criticism of Clifton who had pitched the camp in such an exposed spot, we moved down into the bottom of a narrow Cornish valley near Menheniot, on the Trelawney estate. We had no floor-boards and few ground-sheets and so had to make the best of the long soaking grass under our tents. Meanwhile the rain continued. The particular tent in which I lay was pitched on ground uncovered by grass; we scooped out hollows in the earth and retired to rest. But soon we awoke to find ourselves lying in deep pools of water, while a little brook trickled in at the tent door. We now abandoned our tent and moved into Trelawney's barn, where we laid out our damp paillasses to dry. A large number of other boys followed our example, and the barn became our regular sleeping quarters.

It was my job to take charge of half the camp in daily expeditions to different farms. The weather improved, we became hard and tough, we ate large meals, and slept like young animals.

These few weeks in Cornwall form the only period in

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my life when I have engaged in what is called manual labour. They were amongst the most satisfying I have ever known. In recalling the complete happiness of a day filled from the moment of waking to the moment of sleeping again with pleasant routine in the open air, unspoilt by heavy responsibility or mental strain, when the mind seemed able to rest in the harmony of the body with nature, I think I can understand why T. E. Lawrence enlisted as a private in the Air Force after having created a kingdom in Arabia.

Life in the barn was peculiarly pleasant. There were boys from all Houses in the School mixed up together. There was no red tape, no superiority of place in the School. As leader of half the camp I was regarded as boss and what I said went; that was all. A small fag in the School House became my self-appointed batman. At 6 a.m. he called me with an apple, a store of which he had pinched from Trelawney's apple racks! He would then roll me about till I woke up properly. He was a small, dirty, impish little creature with a sparkling wit and a monkey manner. For many years I retained a great affection for him. In the end he made it rather difficult by becoming a leading æsthete at Oxford and completely giving up soap and water, a matter which had never been his strong point. At this time, however, although muddy, he still bathed on occasions. He was completely ingenuous. After aggravating you till you kicked him, he would prattle to you of all the queer things that were for ever running through his mind. Drugged with air, I would fall asleep while he still talked, to awake next morning to find him

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sitting cross-legged by my head pushing a Trelawney apple under my nose.

He left a few days before the camp broke up. His departure was characteristic. He had lost his stud, his tie, his railway ticket, and most of his money. He was very grubby; we forcibly washed him, found him the necessary neck appurtenances, made a small collection for him, and started him on the journey home to his aunt, sadly bidding him farewell. I still possess somewhere some queer letters I got from him afterwards, full of bizarre illustrations of black cats, imaginings, and affection.

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The Lent term, 1918, was my last in the school. It was the darkest moment in the war. Much of the French army had mutinied; Russia was done; and then in March the Germans broke through the British Fifth Army.

But looking back on it now I don't think I brought these events subjectively into my thoughts once during those last three months. I was captain of the Rugger Fifteen at Rugby School. That was enough. Indeed, I fear I shall never again attain to an equal position of importance among my fellows as I did then. One day I entered the shoe room in the House and found two small boys fighting bitterly over a boot. I separated them and inquired the cause.

"You gave me your boots to carry down to the field and he pinched them," said one, pointing at the other.

To add to my athletic glory I also obtained my Running



## RUGBY CONTINUED

Eight one memorable afternoon that term, when four of us came in ahead of the entire Uppingham Eight in a seven-mile cross-country race. That evening I gave my twin brother his "rigger" cap, and both of us were accorded one more "Hall Cheering."

I had a study of my own, and fags to light my fire and run errands for me. I treated these small boys very well, protecting their interests and helping them to obtain enough food. Alas, when later on in life I have come across them again, it has always been with the shock of disillusionment. One small boy in particular whom I knew then, aged fifteen, was the very personification of youthful beauty and high spirits, but when I met him fifteen years later he had grown fat, flabby, and unutterably dull, with a voice like a big bassoon. And as I fled from him my youthful dreams fled from me.

To make my contentment complete I was in G. F. Bradby's Form. I can still remember the pleasure of listening to him teach, and how I kept the notebooks of his lectures for years afterwards. He and Hastings were the only two masters who taught me anything interesting while I was in the School.

I had now become immensely proud of my House and School, and jealous of their good name. Thus far the public-school system had made me part of its corporate being, though football prowess had freed me from its repressive code at an early age and allowed me to be myself.

We were very badly off for food in the School at that time, as the townspeople were unwilling to share their rations with an influx of six hundred hungry boys who

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appeared in the town at intervals during the year. In our House the shortage was very acute, due, I believe, to a leakage of provisions during their passage from the house-keeper's stores to our table. Sometimes after a last meal, consisting of tea, one slice of bread, a small pat of margarine, and a plate of vegetable soup, we went to bed very hungry. Added to this, after a "rugger" match I used to have to entertain the opposing Captain and a number of his team to tea. I soon ran out of money for extra provisions, so I looked about for some source of revenue. Remembering a vague rule that members of the School could be fined if they walked across the cricket pitch during the winter, I put up a notice on the School board to the effect that in future anybody seen crossing the cricket pitch on Bigside would be fined half a crown. The fact that I was not a cricketer myself did not deter me in the least, and the following Sunday I came out of Chapel early and took up a position of vantage beside the old Pavilion, from where I could observe boys as they streamed out of Chapel. I selected at random the names of some half-dozen boys from other Houses as they crossed the pitch, later sending a little note round to their heads of Houses requesting the collection of the fine. This I did whenever I ran short of money during the term. I never kept an account of the fund in any way, but the English believe in law and order and in playing the game, and so, as Captain of the Fifteen, my right was never questioned, and nobody ever asked me what I did with the money.

The shortage of food in our House led me into an even more curious situation. There was then a body, known as

## RUGBY CONTINUED

the *levée* in the School, composed of classical scholars and heads of Houses who had the right to make School rules. Under pressure from the Headmaster it had just promulgated an order that in future no food must be bought in the town by boys in the School, owing to an agitation amongst the townspeople. Being only second on the House list, and not in the *levée* myself, I felt no responsibility for the new rule, and I told the head of our House he had better go and get provisions for us himself, and gave him the money. Not unwillingly, as we were all hungry, he set off with a friend, later returning with several tins of sardines and a number of packets of Force secreted about his person.

Unfortunately, he had been observed by a master in the act of making his purchases, while his companion had been spotted buying a small packet of sugary sweets with which to assuage their hunger. Dr. David was furious; he threatened to expel them both, and talked about common decency and winning the war. Finally the head of the House emerged from the study, and in a shattered voice said that David had decided to take away his Sixth power (prefect's rights) and make me head of the House instead.

This was a bit too much, so, having collected E. A. Montague, the head of the School, I set out to interview the Head myself. I told David it was my fault, and that I thought the food rules unfair on us. I must have been more than usually plausible because, to my astonishment, he told me that I was a fellow after his own heart, that he only wished I was staying on, for in that case he would certainly make me head of the House anyway.

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During the term there were five "rugger" matches, two running matches, four inter-House cross-country runs of seven to eight miles, the Crick run of twelve and a half miles, and the School sports. I became so fit that it was almost easier to trot than walk, and I usually ran down to School from the House. I was so well and happy that time passed as quickly then as it had done slowly during the same months four years before.

The last big event of the term was the School sports. As Captain of the Fifteen I was the official starter. Blank ammunition could not be obtained for the starter's revolver, so I used live rounds instead, stolen from the O.T.C. On one occasion I nearly shot Mr. Cole in the stomach; on another I noticed the entire line of spectators suddenly throw themselves face downwards on the ground, and realized that I had been pointing the gun, which had become jammed, at them while shaking it vigorously.

Our House was extremely unathletic and had no chance of winning the sports trophy, so I decided that I would obtain for it the tug-of-war Challenge Cup, a particularly fine one, as a final act. I trained the House Team with great vigour. We pulled over our first few opponents with comparative ease, but in the final we were evenly matched by another House. They pulled us over once; we replied by pulling them over. In the deciding tug we had got them within an inch of the line when the front man slipped. For a moment we held on, our arms numb with pain and our hands almost unable to grip the rope. Then somebody else slipped, we all toppled over, and they pulled us across at a run. I got up covered all over with wet mud. I was furiously

## RUGBY CONTINUED

disappointed. My plan of carrying the Cup back to the House and placing it on the mantelpiece over the fire, on this my last night, had failed.

Suddenly I realized the term was over. I had done with school life. My little world where I was king was no more; to-morrow I would be a nobody again; worse still, I would be less than a nobody, an army recruit. I went back to my House alone and sat down in my study, that of the head of games, on whose door were carved the names of all my predecessors, the last of whom was Rodger. The fire had not been lighted. In the twilight I felt cold and very disconsolate. Suddenly I became aware of a weight in my pocket and drew out the revolver, noticing as I did so that four of its chambers were still loaded. I put it down on the table before me and continued to stare at the familiar objects around with a sort of dull fascination. My eye fell on a row of school books in one of the shelves. The last in the line was a fat little green arithmetic book, which I hated passionately, and next it a large flat grammar, full of irregular verbs. I stretched out my hand slowly, took up the gun, and fired the four remaining bullets into the shelf, scoring a bull with the last round through the arithmetic book.

The door opened and my football friend H. J. Kittermaster entered in some agitation, to find me standing laughing in the middle of the room with a smoking gun in my hand.

## CHAPTER V

### *Army*

**A**FTER LEAVING RUGBY I had a few weeks' holiday in Ireland. The country was momentarily peaceful and prosperous due to war prices. Dublin was rebuilding herself. We seemed infinitely far off from the conflict which was shattering Europe. Indeed life there was so unreal that I was glad when the telegram came telling me to join up.

One windy April morning I set out from home once more, this time to join the Bushey Cadet Battalion to be trained for a commission in the Irish Guards. The mail boat was crowded that morning with troops returning from leave, school boys, and ordinary travellers. The sea was choppy, its surface broken by small white-capped waves. As we approached Holyhead we began to draw up on a big Japanese cargo boat. When yet a few miles astern of her we heard a loud explosion: a torpedo had hit her forward and she began to settle down at once. Immediately we changed our course, put on steam and dashed by, zig-zagging, leaving two drifters to stand by the sinking vessel, while a couple of destroyers, an airship, and some ten more drifters took up the chase of the submarine in the shallow

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Irish Sea. We had entered the war zone. From now on everything we saw was directed to one end—the defeat of Germany. Holyhead was a naval port; the trains were organized on semi-military lines; as we looked out of the carriage windows we saw mile upon mile of munition works in North Wales blackening the sky with smoke; whenever the train stopped the stations were crowded with troops; even conversation was concerned solely with war.

At this time the submarine campaign was at its height, and hunger was actually being experienced in England. In Europe the Germans seemed to be triumphing. Russia was down; Serbia and Rumania were occupied; Gallipoli had been evacuated by the British; the Italians had been broken at Caporetto; the British and French lines had been pierced on the Western front; Paris was being bombarded; Haig had issued his famous “backs to the wall” order. The Allied cause seemed all but lost. In reality at this moment Germany had already overreached herself, her last effort had been made, and in a few weeks the Allies’ Western armies, transfused with new American blood, were to roll back the invaders.

During the summer while in training we watched the conflict as if it were some great game. Desperately we backed our side, hoping to get into the *mêlée* before all was over, and hardly noticing that the expectation of life for boys just older than ourselves grew less and less. Even when our friends were killed or wounded we never considered the likelihood that we might be next on the list. We wanted to fight. Perhaps we were the only people left who did.

## THE SILVER FLEECE

The cadet battalion to which I was posted was specially organized to train officers for the Brigade of Guards. True, at this time it had been enlarged so as to admit a number of rankers from line regiments, as well as some elderly gentlemen (for so they appeared to us) between forty and fifty years of age, such as Gerald du Maurier, who had been removed from their key positions and sent to join up. On the whole, however, the majority of the cadets were still boys straight from public schools, mostly from Eton and Harrow. These two schools, particularly Eton, produce a special type. No remark has caused greater irritation in England than that of the Anglo-Irishman, Wellington, when he said that the battle of Waterloo had been won on the playing-fields of Eton. But it was quite true. Indeed, the only excuse for Eton and Harrow is that it was true.

By the fourth year of the war this historic officer class had disappeared from a large part of Britain's huge conscript army, and only predominated in certain corps, the most noticeable of which was the Brigade of Guards. As a fighting unit the Guards' regiments were unique. There was nothing like them in any other army. True, the men were selected on purely physical grounds. All were above the average in physique and strength, most of them being over six feet in height. Their training was conducted on the most rigorous and militaristic lines. They were put "on the square" on arrival at the depot, and there bullied, brow-beaten, and knocked about by N.C.O.'s of physical strength equal to their own, till individuality was broken, and they would obey any order automatically and kill or be killed.

Their fighting spirit was roused by a special corps of



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bayonet-fighting sergeant-majors. These became so good at their job that they could rouse an almost demoniacal spirit in the men. The idea of a sane person, even if he belongs to the prize-fighting class, foaming at the mouth and cursing obscenely while ripping up a sack containing earth and straw with a bayonet might appear a little ridiculous to the casual observer in cold blood. But the latter is well advised to keep his mirth to himself and not approach too close at such a moment, for one look at the eyes of the men aflame with blood lust will be enough to dispel any such feelings that he may entertain.

With the men the likeness to the Prussian Guard ended. The Guards' officers were peculiar to England; they were of several types: the best, magnificent, the flower of England's chivalry, the envy of the world—the worst, insolent, casual, possessing no particular physique; indeed, some of them were definitely below the average, with narrow chests and spindly legs; they were certainly not intellectual; their morals were often atrocious. They appeared to regard God and man with a certain *blasé* insolence. They spoke with an exaggerated drawl, appearing sometimes almost too exhausted to pronounce their words completely. Life itself seemed to them rather a bore, and death merely a bit more of a bore. They called each other by their Christian names in the trenches. They were very irritating to the rest of the army, yet they knew how to die, and the Guards' combination was invincible.

The cadet battalion at Bushey was organized to give us a six months' course, so arranged that by the end we had acquired a working knowledge of barrack square drill for

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show purposes and of field work of all kinds—trench fighting, open warfare, bombing, machine-guns, gas, etc.—so as to fit us for the front immediately on leaving. We were also given a certain amount of military law and etiquette in preparation for regimental life. Hence we had a full day, commencing at 6 a.m. and ending at 10 p.m., with very little spare time. On the whole we enjoyed ourselves. The sergeants had been told that we were embryo officers of the Guards, and that they must not employ their usual vocabulary of reproductive and gynæcological terms when addressing us. Sometimes this was almost more than they could manage, but on the whole we got on very well with them. Indeed, they were often friendly, and used to come and talk to us off parade about their family worries. The regimental sergeant-major, who on parade was about the most terrifying spectacle I have ever seen, once took me into his room and showed some coloured photographs of his wife and children. Only the bayonet-fighting sergeant-major found us a little trying. He was apparently allowed to use any language he liked to encourage our fighting spirit; but even his most lurid anatomical descriptions of the sacks we were assaulting failed to produce any marked effect on us. In desperation he used to make us try and bayonet him, or jump about in front of us with a parry stick yelling like a maniac. On one such occasion he picked on me.

“Come here, Cadet Collis,” he roared. “Don’t stand there like a castrated mule.”

I lunged at him as directed; he knocked the blade aside with his hand, kicked me in the stomach, and disarmed

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me, nearly breaking my wrist. I got up disliking him intensely. He seized a parry stick and led me round and round, making me lunge and swing the butt of my rifle in the approved style. Suddenly he slipped and I brought the blade of my bayonet down on the side of his neck, over the jugular vein, and stopped it there and laughed. He went white and walked off, looking disconcerted and put out. If I'd cut his neck open he'd have taken it quite naturally, but to be laughed at at such a moment completely unnerved him.

Our company and platoon commanders were quite typical Guards' officers. Both were covered with decorations and wound chevrons. Our company commander was said to have captured a trench almost single-handed while shot through the stomach. He was fairly good on the parade ground, but our platoon commander not only knew no drill but had a lisp, and was apt to give us impossible orders at critical moments. Once during an inspection the battalion was ordered to march off. When our turn came to move he forgot to call us to attention before giving the order to slope arms. He yelled "Slope arms." As we were in the "at ease" position this was impossible, so we just stood there motionless. He looked at us in amazement, wondering if he or we had suddenly gone mad. Still we remained motionless. A wild look came into his eyes. He yelled again; nothing happened. The position was now desperate; the whole battalion was getting mixed up. Finally the C.O. came up to see what was happening and found him almost in an apoplectic fit and the platoon of cadets paralyzed with internal mirth.

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For six months I shared a tent with two companions. One was called Le Blanc. He came from the Channel Islands, and all I can remember about him was that he was always known in the battalion as 'Blank.' The other, Boughton Leigh, was a school friend from Rugby, an athlete with a magnificent body, and a mind as yet only partially conscious. His instincts were healthy, he had no complexes and fewer worries than anybody I have ever met. He was so English that it took me nearly six months to discover that he was just what he appeared to be. It is notorious that the English and the Irish, though they hate each other collectively, get on as individuals almost perfectly—they are complementary. The Englishman finds romance and laughter in the companionship—he lives. The Irishman finds reliability and sureness—he rests. We lived together in our confined quarters in almost perfect harmony though our attitudes towards life were sometimes completely opposed. We differed particularly on the question of "sport." To him the greatest joy the world could offer was to hunt a stag through the mountains of Mull or Skye; to sight his quarry and then make a long detour, creeping upon it against the wind across wild angry country, to arrive at last, sheltered by a copse in range of the animal, to see it stand proudly holding its great head against the setting sun, to measure the distance, sight, fire and then see it bound into the air and fall while the report echoed through the rocks. As he spoke I would follow the chase with all the joy of the hunter till the last moment. Then instead of a triumphant killer I would see the stricken animal dying in the heather, its tongue lolling out, blood

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about its mouth, while it gave up its life painfully in long sighing breaths. I would argue, almost begging him, to see it as I did, but he could not, though he grew to accept my opposition to his joy as something as essentially part of me as the reverse was of him.

He was a perfect companion in arms, ready for any adventure, strong and humorous. I can still remember him getting me ready for breakfast roll-call parade at 6.45 a.m. after one of my many disasters—I had been badly knocked about the day before in the heavyweight boxing championship, or had put my knee out playing football—first I would hear him moving about in the dark, shining my boots as well as his own and laying out my equipment; then he would dress me, tying me together with bandages and elastic strapping and finally he would drag me onto parade just in time to avoid trouble.

Occasionally our company would get two or three days' leave; as both of us had homes too far away to reach, and few friends in the south of England we were usually at a loss for a base. On one of these occasions Captain X, our company commander, whose family lived outside London some ten or twelve miles from the camp, invited us to stay at his house. During the subsequent two days I fell horribly in love with his little sister aged seventeen. The time was very short and all too soon I found myself back in camp and quite cut off from her. I was only eighteen, it was awful, I daren't write—after a week of torture I said to Boughton Leigh one day when we had the afternoon more or less free, "Come and visit the X's." He pointed out that their house could only be reached across country, that there

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were no trains and that we couldn't possibly get passes—at that time the Allies apparently were losing the war and discipline was very severe, emergency parades and fatigues might occur at any time and it was difficult to obtain passes to leave the vicinity of the camp except at official times. Then seeing me desperate he said no more but borrowed two bicycles and off we went. The X household were delighted to see us and pressed us to stay for dinner. Their gallant, wounded, incorrigible son was the romance and wonder of their lives; that "his troops" should drop in on them thus obviously pleased them immensely. We sat and talked, at first all telling each other what a wonderful man our captain was. Gradually the conversation drifted into general topics. I began to get a little restive. Once I caught a glance from Molly's brown eyes. I longed to escape with her somewhere but could think of no excuse. Father and Boughton Leigh continued in the true British manner to discuss the slaughter of every form of "game" from elephants to snipe. At last dinner was served. This was but little better. True I sat beside Molly but all the time I so wanted to kiss her that I was unable to talk with any intelligence. She was very silent also. The port was reached, the ladies rose to go. As I opened the door Molly gave me one intimate, dazzling glance as she hurried out ahead of her mother. I turned back to the table crazy with joy and accepted a cigar from the old man before I knew what I'd done—I'd only just started smoking and more than five cigarettes in the day made me sick at that time—the expensive Havana was in my hand however and I couldn't get rid of it. Well, I thought, I'm a man now anyway—here

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goes, she loves me. I had another glass of port; I lit the cigar; I leant back and discussed the appointment of General Foch as generalissimo of the Allied armies with father as man to man. After a time, however, I knew something was wrong, I felt giddy, I began to feel nauseated—what could I do? I looked about desperately. I didn't like to throw the cigar away. I took another puff. A few minutes later I rose suddenly, made some excuse, and dashed out unsteadily into the garden, tripped up and fell into a number of gooseberry bushes. Here I lay and vomited stupendously. After some time I got to my feet, brushed off the mud as best I could and went back to the house. They had joined the ladies. Boughton Leigh looked at my pale, green face on which despair fought with nausea for the mastery. He rose. "We must be getting back," he said. They said they were very sorry we had to go. They said good-bye, father hoped we'd get home safely, Molly shook me by the hand but her brown eyes were cold, and I heard mother say as we mounted our bicycles, "George, you shouldn't give boys cigars." We rode on in silence. After some miles a light flashed in front of us suddenly. Two military policemen stepped into the road and held us up, demanded our passes, asked us why we had no lights on our bicycles and took our regimental numbers, etc.

Two days later we were informed that we must attend "battalion orders." The sergeant-major "fell us in" in the passage outside the colonel's office, yelling "*'Shun! Right turn! Quick march!*" as if he were addressing the entire regiment on parade. "*Halt! Right turn!*" We found ourselves facing the colonel, the adjutant and . . . hells bells,

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Captain X, our company commander. The sergeant-major read out the crime rapidly. "Cadets Collis and Boughton Leigh proceeding in the direction of London, 10.30 p.m. Wednesday, 3rd inst. without regimental passes, and having no lights on their bicycles." The colonel looked at us with the utmost ferocity, as did the adjutant; Captain X *never batted an eyelid*. "Breaking barracks, proceeding towards London, always the same story," roared the colonel. "Have you anything to say?" "No, sir," we replied, glancing furtively at our company commander, who appeared intensely interested in a fly on the ceiling.

The C.O. leant backwards and spoke to Captain X for a moment in an undertone. "All right, X, for this time," he said audibly. Then he turned on us and gave us hell for two minutes. He stopped. It was like the sudden silence after a bombardment. "Reprimanded!" shouted the sergeant-major. "*Left turn! Quick march!* Left, right, left. Swing the arms from the shoulders." We found ourselves marching down the corridor and realized nothing had happened—only a ticking off. As we rounded the corner I received the hell of a kick on the behind. "Take that from me, Cadet Collis," said Boughton Leigh.

One day about the middle of the summer a cadet returned from leave coughing and retired to bed. A week later a hundred out of the hundred and twelve members of our company were down with a strange infectious disease that had just appeared in England and was called, for lack of a better title, "Spanish 'Flu." Its infectivity was almost incredible. During the week men collapsed at every parade and were carried into the long army huts in which we lived. I my-



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self went down about the middle of the week, walking to the hut and getting into bed as I felt the fever coming on. For the next five days I lay in the hut with twenty others, our temperatures running at about 104° F., while the sun beat down on the galvanized iron roof and we tossed between our coarse army blankets wracked by an almost intolerable headache. There were no nurses and no medicines save No. 9 pills and cascara tablets, one of which we were given daily. The result of this treatment was frightful, as the hut contained but a single temporary commode. This became in such constant demand that soon a queue had formed as each cadet rolled out of bed and staggered weakly down the hut. Nobody died, though several of the tougher colonials and rankers who had held out, refusing to go sick, collapsed and became delirious. Our two officers nursed the whole lot of us. Apparently they never went to bed or rested. Both of them drank a bottle of champagne a day; neither of them caught the disease. Whenever you opened your eyes they were always there helping somebody.

When the fever left us we struggled out into the sunshine, and when we could walk we went on leave. This interlude is one of the few vivid memories I retain of my time in the army. The daily routine of camp life which filled almost our entire waking hours and the discipline which meant somebody else taking the responsibility for our actions almost prevented individual thought.

Suddenly, before our training was quite complete, the armistice was signed and the war stopped. At first it was almost impossible to realize that it was over. We had been

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carried along since we were fourteen years of age in the millstream of war-thought and action. Now suddenly the sluice gates were closed. For a time we were carried on by our own momentum; but gradually we came to a stop, finding ourselves free in a very queer and unexpected world. From the time when we had begun to be capable of conscious thought the only possible future had been the war army. There had been no need to think farther than that. We had not thought about the probability of getting killed or maimed to any extent, but neither had we thought of any other future. Now with overwhelming suddenness the whole *motif* of life was changed. We woke up to find ourselves faced once more with the necessity to think and plan; ahead loomed years of mental and physical tensions, governed by the inexorable laws of the survival of the fittest.

I was told I could be demobilized at once under Rule 43, which stated that on signing a document, in which I said that I made no claim for war gratuity, I could be released from the army to continue my education. So just after Christmas 1918 I found myself free. I didn't know what to do. All my surviving friends were in England. I had lost touch altogether with Ireland. I hated the idea of going home. So I persuaded my father to send me to Cambridge to study medicine.

### ***PART THREE***





## CHAPTER VI

### *Cambridge*

IN MAY 1919 Cambridge had seen the last of its war-time occupation. The colleges had been cleaned up and disinfected where necessary, and all was in readiness for a return to academic life. Up to the University they came, men who had left in 1914 and fought for four long years, those who had gone out to fight in 1915 and the subsequent years up to 1918, and a crowd of school boys who had just missed the war. I belonged to a small class who had been in the war-time army, but too young for active service. We were a sort of *liaison* between the war veterans, whose state of mind we partially understood, and the school boys from whom we were scarcely separated.

It was a unique moment in the history of the University. There were no freshmen, no third-year men; the dons

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themselves, save for a few old men whom the war had left untouched drowsing in their rooms, had lost their donnish manner. All walked about the gardens and the courts breathing in freedom and beauty again. No more fear: fear of personal pain and death; fear of having to outrage the soul by foul deeds; fear of senior officers or sergeant-majors. There were no orders to be given or received. All men were brothers again. No words can describe the glorious freedom of that moment. Of all people the intellectual English dislike militarism most. Now its forced supremacy was broken and we discarded its trappings with unutterable delight. True, a good many uniforms could still be seen about, worn by those who had been recently demobilized and hadn't yet acquired a civilian outfit. But these were worn with a fine disregard for military etiquette, and only added to the general effect.

I suppose it must have rained once or twice that summer, but if it did I don't remember it. I can only remember the sun shining on Great Court, on the tree-shaded Backs, on the fens around. One who had fought quoted these lines to me:

*All things are passed and over,  
The tasks are done and the tears are shed;  
Yesterday's errors let yesterday cover,  
Yesterday's wounds which smarted and bled  
Are healed with a healing which night has shed.*

*Here are the skies all burnished brightly,  
Here is the spent earth all reborn,  
Here are the tired limbs springing lightly*

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*To face the sun and to share the morn  
In the chrism of dew and the cool of dawn.*

The old academic life revived but slowly. Intellectual endeavour seemed so strange and unfamiliar that it was hard to work. It was so good to be alive, to be free, that for the moment concentrated reading for hours on end was quite impossible. Besides there was so much to re-discover, so many things to do. We took out the punts and canoes again and sought the places we had heard about, but to which nobody had been for five years.

I remember setting out one day to explore the upper river. The May trees were in bloom and the fields were full of wild flowers. We met few, if any, other boats on our way up-stream. There were no gramophones with jazz tunes, no trippers; the river flowed silently, keeping its thoughts to itself.

We came to Granchester, found Rupert Brooke's "bosky wood," remembered that he had said:

*I only know that you may lie  
Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,  
And flower-lulled in sleepy grass  
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,  
Until the centuries blend and blur  
In Granchester, in Granchester.*

We crossed Byron's pool, pulled the punt over the weir, and set out again on the now narrowing river. Mile after mile we went up-stream; in places it was narrower than the punt's length; sometimes trees met overhead; some-

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times we would come upon great dray horses with hairy legs and long lower lips taking their Sunday rest; then again we would glide silently through green fields bathed in radiant sunshine while the air 'was full of the scent of May trees.

*They slope, they curve, they swell,  
They rise in waves, they flow,  
They wash against the roads,  
They swirl around the single trees,  
They compass cottages and farms,  
They island out the copses,  
They beat against the woods—  
The green fields of England.*

*The green fields of England—  
Her secret and her sign,  
Her word to all the world,  
Her heart, her song, her flag,  
Her deepest truth divine.*

T. S. C.

To many Cambridge is a fair memory, a consolation amidst the ugliness of the machine age; but to those who knew her that bright early summer she stands as a hope amidst disillusionment. At that moment Lloyd George may have been tricking Clemenceau and Clemenceau tricking Lloyd George, and both making a fool of Wilson, and all three laying the foundations for a new war; but the young men who strolled on the Backs only knew that beauty and peace still lived. As yet "everything had not been buried



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in the crash of collapsing lies," and for the time they were content to let Cambridge begin to heal their wounds.

. . . . .

As a first-year medical student I was forced to attend more lectures than most of my contemporaries in Trinity. Chemistry, biology, and physics in their elementary forms are merely long lists of facts to be remembered and hence, academically speaking, the term was a very dull one for me. But as we considered ourselves extremely hard worked if we did four hours' study in the day this detracted little from the joy of living.

So the May term of 1919 went happily by, and like it, the extra long vacation term which has now become a regular part of the medical course.

By the beginning of the winter the University was once more full, and we set about reviving the old life in earnest. My part in this was with the Rugger Club.

After a couple of games I was put in the 'Varsity side, and from that time on, except for illness or injury, I played regularly for Cambridge.

One day towards the end of the term Greenwood, the University skipper, who had played for Cambridge in 1913 and returned to finish his education after four years in the trenches, came up to G. S. Conway and myself as we were leaving the ground and said,

"You may as well order your things."

We were puzzled; then it suddenly dawned on us that we had been given our "Blue" (university letter). We

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were the first two to obtain this honour after the war. It was a tremendous moment. In England the gaining of a "Blue" is generally regarded as a more desirable achievement than becoming an M.P. or being made a knight. The social position it confers lasts for many years, for to be an "old Blue" is to have an assured status for the rest of one's life.

We were completely carried away by excitement and joy, and from now till the 'Varsity match we neither thought nor dreamt of anything save the game.

The Oxford and Cambridge match, played at Queen's Club, in the middle of London, in a fog, was somewhat of a disappointment. I was badly hurt, going down before a fierce Oxford rush, but except for this one act of gallantry I played badly and felt fed-up with myself.

After the match a large cheering crowd surrounded the pavilion. I had started to take off my things when the secretary came in and said I was wanted. I threw a sweater round my shoulders and emerged into an outer room where I found my gaunt Aunt Maria standing between two policemen. For a moment I thought she had been arrested; but no, she had merely ordered the force to lead her to her nephew who was playing on the winning side. And there she was, a little dishevelled but quite intact, and overjoyed that she had seen the King shake hands with me.

The following term I was picked to play for the South of Ireland against the North, in Belfast, towards the end of January. I had not played for a month but I decided to have a try for my Irish International cap, so set out from Cambridge about 6 p.m. on Friday afternoon and travelled to

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Belfast, *via* Dublin, where my mother joined me. I arrived about twelve noon on Saturday, having had no sleep and with a cold in one eye. We played in pouring rain on a very muddy ground which was normally used as a horse-show field. We were badly beaten; I put my knee out; and I thought Belfast the foulest town I'd ever seen.

I left immediately after the match and travelled straight back to Cambridge arriving about 3 p.m. on Sunday afternoon. I could hardly walk; one eye was closed; I had not slept for two whole nights. When I met a friend he didn't recognize me. I went to bed and slept for twenty-four hours. When I awoke it was the next afternoon. I took some little time to orient myself. Then I felt my body all over, got out of bed, found my knee was better and my eye cured.

I didn't play again that season but in spite of this was elected Honorary Secretary and vice-Captain to the University Rugger Club for the next season. The post was one of some importance in the University as the selection of the team is virtually in the hands of the Captain and Honorary Secretary.

. . . . .

By this time we had become fully immersed in the medical course and had started dissection. In a large glass-roofed hall were laid out the pickled corpses, whose arteries had been injected with red lead, and which had been immersed in preservative for a considerable period before being handed over to us.

Undoubtedly anatomy is the most disheartening and ap-

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palling subject when faced for the first time. To begin with, a new language of thousands and thousands of difficult words has to be learned.

At the particular moment when we commenced our studies, the subject was even more heart-breaking as somebody had invented a new simpler international nomenclature. Unfortunately most of our teachers still lectured in the old, and hence, as our books were printed in the new, we had to learn both. Having learned the language the next stage is the mental feat of remembering the relations of the structures to one another in their different locations. To acquire this knowledge it is necessary to spend hour after hour in hot, stuffy, smelly dissecting rooms, cutting up corpses bit by bit so as to expose each structure clearly, and then to go home and pore over anatomy books late into the night.

Later, when this knowledge becomes related to physiological and disease processes, to the practice of surgery or the study of evolution, anatomy may become a subject of enthralling interest; but to the beginner it is a pure torture which can only be appreciated by those who have suffered the mental anguish caused by the effort to retain a large number of apparently irrelevant facts in the conscious mind long enough to satisfy the examiners.

The actual revulsion of feeling from having to associate with corpses lasts only for a very short time, partly because the subjects have become completely unhuman in the process of pickling and partly because human senses can get used to anything. To me at least it was much less distressing

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to dissect out an old lady's eye or more intimate parts than to see a pig killed.

About this time I met a boy from Yorkshire who had just entered the University. He was opposite to me in almost every physical and mental state. I was large, thick-set; he was small and slight. I ate very quickly and never noticed what I ate; he ate slowly and liked his food. I loved the unusual and the dangerous; his motto was "safety first." In spite of being completely incompatible in almost every way we became devoted friends from the moment we met; and the partnership we formed in the dissecting-room lasted for the remainder of the medical course, through four years of incessant toil in Cambridge and London. On entering the anatomy school together and applying for "a part" we were told there was a real shortage due to some newly enacted law which made it possible for everybody to get buried, "in the land now fit for heroes to live in." And so we were given an arm from a dead-born baby and a leg without a foot, and we grumbled a lot. However, there was so much to learn anyhow that these deficiencies of the "meat shop" were soon forgotten.

We now became what are called typical medical students. We brought home bits of corpse and placed them in our non-medical friends' beds; we took part in University rags; we were inclined to use anatomical terms in our conversation and externally we became somewhat subhuman, though in Cambridge we were helped by the beauty of our surroundings and by the fact that we lived in a cosmopolitan community. We were able to escape whenever we had

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a moment into an entirely different world, but we never had time to read anything but medicine.

During the winter it was still more difficult for me. Not only had I to play two matches a week for the 'Varsity, but as secretary I had to make most of the arrangements also. During the Christmas term I became progressively more tired, but it was perhaps the most enjoyable "rugger" season of my life. We played all the best clubs in England and Wales, while Dublin University visited us. Conway, the captain, was a very exceptional person, being not only an athlete of great prowess, but also a first-class classical scholar and son of the well-known Professor of Classics at Manchester.

I remember one occasion when we were all having tea together after a great match at Leicester, played before a crowd of twenty thousand people. Old Conway had come over to see his son, whom he considered quite his best bit of original work, lead Cambridge to victory. At tea I found myself seated beside the old man, who seemed somewhat out of his element in this burly athletic atmosphere, for clearly he had never played a violent game in his life. The general conversation was loud and very much of the "shop" variety. Some one would lean across the Professor and say:

"Collis, do you remember that pass on the left wing just before half-time when if I'd been given the ball straight I'd certainly have scored?"

"Rather, old man," I'd reply.

For some time, not a very long period, the Professor bore this. Then he turned resolutely to me and said:

"You remember that passage in the tenth book of Livy

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about the elephants proceeding along a precipitous road?" —He then quoted the passage in Latin.

"Rather, sir," I replied.

At this point we were interrupted by the Leicester hooker, who considered that the rule about feet up in the scrum was "bloody silly." I agreed with him entirely, and old Conway continued:

"That passage always had worried me, probably worried you too. Well, I was doing a little research in Italy last summer and I found the original manuscript, where the text was quite different. There it clearly stated that the elephants were proceeding along a road on the side of a precipitous mountain—a very different matter. And would you believe it, the error had arisen entirely through a *German* transcription of the original text!" Old Conway still hated the Germans horribly. After this he sank back into meditative silence, and I returned to the discussion of "rugger shop" which was proceeding around me.

The tour following the 'Varsity match that year took us to Edinburgh, where we played two very ferocious matches. I captained Cambridge in the one against the Academicals, which we won handsomely, scoring from the kick-off without the ball ever touching the ground. The dinner that followed was in the true Scots spirit; we drank large quantities of whisky. One of our most powerful players became fighting drunk, and it was with great difficulty that we got him back to the hotel. He refused to go to bed, so we removed his trousers, thinking thereby to prevent him from sallying forth again. We had hardly left him, however, before he emerged from his door clad simply in a shirt and

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sock suspenders. Scattering the maids before him, he dashed down the main stairs, crossed the lounge, and disappeared into the street. He was last seen entering a cab closely followed by R. Cove-Smith. There we left him, feeling that he was in good hands, for not only was Cove-Smith a secretary of the Student Christian Movement, but undoubtedly one of the strongest men in England.

Next day I was mounted by a Scots friend for the Ayrshire Hunt. I could only raise a very old pair of riding-breeches and some dilapidated puttees. The hunt was a good one, and I felt terribly for my host as my puttees gradually unwound and flapped in the outraged Master's face, exposing the while a large expanse of woollen underwear which I had donned by way of percussion mat. Notwithstanding this frightful scene we had a wonderful day. I stuck on desperately, as I knew that were I to fall off I could never get on again, as I had been smitten on the hip bone with such violence in the match the day before that I could scarcely stand.

The following day was the Sabbath. It was the first time I had endured the full rigours of a Presbyterian Sunday, and I found it almost unbelievably severe. We started with a few grim family prayers; we then went to the local kirk for the greater part of the morning. The church, if so it could be called, was specially designed to eliminate all possible suggestion of beauty, appearing somewhat like a huge barn into which had been fitted numerous horse-boxes. The devotions of the morning were only a mere foretaste of the real *pièce de résistance* which came later in the afternoon, when we were solemnly marched off to the local



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Presbyterian Orphanage, where an Evangelical preacher was booked to address the children. The hall was crowded with smelly orphans; the air was very heavy with the odour of sweat as it reached us in the gallery. The children sat in serried ranks facing a kind of rostrum on which the speaker stood, while behind, and facing the orphans, sat a row of grand, grim elders.

On this occasion the preacher was a famous scientist who did this sort of thing in his spare time for the greater glory of God. He was elderly and rather absent-minded. He began, "Boys and girls, as you all know, the leprosy bacillus is acid fast." He paused, the elders looked a little shaken, the chief elder half rose from his seat, the little orphans, however, appeared unmoved by this statement of fact and continued to regard their preacher with blank, expressionless faces. A slight frown crossed his face, he cleared his throat and started again.

"Boys and girls," he said, in the melodious language of Burns, "as you all know we are eternally damned." The elders' faces cleared, the chief elder relaxed once more. It was all right; just a momentary lapse; the Professor was quite sound, he would not disappoint them. And he didn't; he gave those children hell for three-quarters of an hour, till their little eyes were popping out of their heads.

. . . . .

This season I thought my chances for an Irish International cap were good, and I looked forward to the North v. South match in Dublin with confidence. A week before the date, however, I awoke with a headache. I felt weak, tired,

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and sometimes feverish all the next six days, but had no definite symptoms of any known complaint. I decided to play. My tutor, the somewhat academic Mr. Harrison, refused to allow me off till the Friday evening, so once more I had to travel over by night and play the next day. I arrived home very tired next morning, feeling weaker than ever, but still determined to play; for above all else at that time I desired an Irish cap.

I went to bed during the morning, but lay tossing in a fever. At lunch I got up, set out for the ground, and played. The match and the night journey back to Cambridge were a nightmare. I felt terribly ill; but so immensely fit was I, and so strong my body as yet, that I was able still to drive it on. On reaching my rooms in Trinity once more, I took my temperature for the first time: it was 103° F. I went to bed, but could get no rest till the doctor arrived and doped me.

Now commenced a strange illness. Day after day the fever rose at night to fall again in the morning. The doctor was puzzled; he called in two others; they talked about typhoid, made various tests, but remained mystified, and the fever continued without any localizing sign for ten days. Then suddenly large, painful, red lumps appeared on my shins. The doctor now announced cheerfully that I was afflicted with a disease called "Erythema Nodosum."

"What's that mean?" I asked innocently, not having learnt then that it's "not done" to question your physician when he tells you plainly what's wrong with you.

"Nobody knows," he said. "It has some sort of connection with rheumatic fever, but people always recover from it anyway."

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Little did I guess then that fortune was doing me a good turn by afflicting me with this strange malady, the mystery of whose cause I should one day help to unravel.

I had shifted over the term before from rooms in New Court to better ones in Whewells Court which looked out on John's Gateway. In New Court I had been looked after by the motherly Mrs. Day, a genuine old retainer, who really enjoyed "doing for" the young gentlemen. On her staircase nobody was ever short, butter, tea, and other necessities being always procurable from somebody else. My Whewells Court bedder, Mrs. P., was of different stuff, however. She "had come down to bed-making," she declared, "through no fault of her own." It was a long, long story which every inhabitant of that staircase heard over and over again. I cannot now recall all the misfortunes which dogged her step by step, but I still remember her description of the last pathetic scene at Mr. P.'s deathbed.

"'Turn over,' I says to 'im, I says, and 'e turns over on me with 'is def rattle." I usually tried to escape when I knew the story was commencing, but now I could not move; she had me at her mercy, and over and over again I heard of poor Mr. P.'s "def rattle," and all the troubles that preceded and followed that tragic event.

Her "help," Mrs. Rumblebottom, was a highly nervous and slightly "mental" lady of middle life who had the habit of entering the room with a rush, and if company was present, stopping short and catching at her mouth in terror. On one occasion, when my three doctors were in consultation Mrs. Rumblebottom entered thus. The spectacle of the three elderly gentlemen seemed too much for her.

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For a moment she stood like a pillar of salt, though her face was very red; then she made a dash for the Gip room, knocking a slop pail, which she was carrying, against one of the physicians' legs *en route*.

"Curse the woman!" he grunted. The Gip room was already occupied by Mrs. P., who told the unfortunate "help" curtly to "get aht." Poor Mrs. Rumblebottom was by now hysterical. She seized a huge china soup-tureen apparently as a kind of charm against the physician who had cursed her and bolted across the room. The door closed and the consultants once more began slowly to shake their heads. Suddenly there was a frightful crash; all three rushed to the door; Mrs. Rumblebottom had fallen, soup-tureen and all, down two flights of stone stairs.

For nearly three weeks the fever wracked me before it began to abate. I grew very weak, tired of bed, and restless. Two friends nursed me. One, my comrade of the Anatomy School, who came in three or four times a day, ordered my meals and did whatever had to be done, pleasant and unpleasant. He was extraordinarily kind, almost selfless in his help. The other, a very different sort of person, one Charles Green, walked into my room with a message for me from some one in his college on the first day of my illness. I had never seen him before; he sat down; we began to talk. There seemed to be some strange affinity between us, as if somewhere long ago in other worlds we had known each other. Day after day he came in and sat with me while we talked. He was a gay person, and I counted the hours till he came. After the illness our ways again separated, we seldom met, and now I know not how he fares, though my

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hope is that, sometime, somewhere, I may repay the debt.

One day an Indian friend called Iyengar, whom I had met at tennis, came into my rooms. I had seen a lot of him the previous term. He was a strange mixture of charm, imagination, and fire. He was very friendly. I remember how I used to prefer going to see him at night because of the smiles of my athletic peers if seen with "a nigger."

"Didn't know you were ill," he said.

"Yes, nobody knows what the hell's wrong with me," I said. "I'm getting sick of bed."

I noticed his eyes were very bright.

"I'm ill too," he said.

"What's wrong?"

"They say I've got T.B., and I'm off to a sanatorium tomorrow.

"Poor Omeo."

Then some others came in. They didn't look friendly. He began to cough, and looking back at me he went away. I never saw him again. The disease had him. He wanted to get back to his home and the sun. His mother came over to fetch him and got him as far as Trieste. There they put him on board ship, but when the authorities heard he was dying of tuberculosis they ordered him ashore again, refusing to have him on board. He died there looking out over the Adriatic. If I had known, as I now know, that I also had been infected with the same germ, having probably caught the disease from him, my whole subsequent career would have been changed, and no doubt I should have had to reside on top of a mountain for years. As it was, the ignorance of my medical advisers as to the probable cause

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of my complaint allowed me to recover, temporarily anyway, without any heart-burnings.

My mother came over from Ireland about the third week of my illness, and as soon as my temperature came down she took me off to the South of France, where I lay in a garden at Cap Martin, between Mentone and Monte Carlo, and rapidly recovered my strength.

The sun shone warmly, the garden was full of freesias, whose intoxicating scent filled the air. The Mediterranean shimmered through the trees. After a week of this treatment the tiredness left me and I began to eat enormous meals. Then a mail arrived from Cambridge. A letter from Conway informed me that Cove-Smith had been elected Captain in my place for the next season. I was horribly disappointed, though I couldn't blame Cove-Smith, whom I recognized as a better player than myself. This thought did not cheer me, however, while the other letters reminded me of the infernal medical course and made me restless, fearing I should never get through if I allowed myself to forget everything I had learned with so much effort. So after another couple of weeks' recuperation I set out for Paris to join a number of my friends who were spending their Easter vacation there, doing a little extra dissection, for bodies were plentiful and cheap in France.

The Anatomy School in Paris to which we attached ourselves was housed in a long low hall with a glass roof on which the sun beat down at midday with great intensity, almost roasting the inmates, both living and dead. The latter were not carefully preserved subjects such as we were accustomed to in our highly organized Cambridge School,

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but corpses pulled out of the Seine, badly injected or not at all, and already in many cases commencing to decay. The smell was something frightful, and danger of infecting our hands very real. Fortunately it was the "head and neck" upon which we had chosen to work, the most difficult but least smelly portion of a corpse from an anatomical point of view. Four of us from Cambridge had the "head and neck," two Americans the abdomen, while a number of others were at work on the arms and legs. Nobody wanted the thorax.

On entering the school one morning rather late with one of my companions, I was surprised to find Augusta, as we called her, lacking a head.

"Who the hell has pinched our head and neck?" we shouted. Somebody pointed through the window into the garden. There we saw our two companions seated on the grass in the sun with the missing "part" between them. We went out and joined them.

"Sorry," Reggie called out, as we approached, "those gory Americans went inside this morning and we couldn't bear the stink any longer, so we disarticulated her neck and brought her out here." So for the rest of the time we spent the day sitting on the grass in the open air while we got on with the job. Nobody objected, indeed nobody really minded what we did. In any case the French aren't fussy about that sort of thing.

By the summer term I had apparently recovered my health and was able to continue my normal activities, which consisted of medical work and tennis.

## CHAPTER VII

### *Buchman*

**I**T WAS ABOUT THIS TIME that life at the University was enlivened by the coming of Buchman.

Exactly how I came to visit Buchman in his temporary rooms in Westminster Theological College I cannot now remember. I can only recall that one summer afternoon, after I had finished dissection in the Anatomy School, I got on my bicycle and went round to Westminster to look for him. Not finding him in his rooms I sat down to write him a note. As I was writing he came in suddenly, breathing rapidly, as if out of breath.

"I got a hunch that somebody was here inquiring for me," he said, "so I just came right back."

I looked at him in some surprise, seeing before me a middle-aged, rather stout, sallow-complexioned and bespectacled person. His hair, thin on top, was grown long and brushed across the crown. He was hot from walking and rather dishevelled. He was not attractive to look at, but from him radiated a sort of vital energy that was infectious. He spoke in an unusual way about unusual things.



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He seemed to watch the effect of his words upon his listener with a keen alertness.

I said very little, but invited him to my rooms. He accepted and we parted.

A few days later he turned up after Hall at my rooms in Trinity. It was a lovely soft Cambridge summer night. He sat with his back to the window; I, looking out at the copper-beech below, and the silhouette of the iron cross on the roof of John's Chapel which stood out against the evening light.

I was twenty-one, the age of youth's greatest tension in the Northern races. At this age all normal young men brought up in the system of education and moral training pertaining in England and Ireland, regardless of religious creed, are much tormented by the demands of their bodies for sexual expression and the inhibitions of their minds. The resulting tension may be good for character formation, as Keyserling thinks, or bad and liable to cause crippling repressions, as some of the psychologists would have us believe. Anyway it is the biggest problem that all young men have to face at this age.

It matters not at all whether the individual man remains continent or not as far as the tension in his mind is concerned, for it is difficult to say whether he who represses his desires by force of will, or he who gives in to them suffers the more. This tension is so powerful that it wells up from the unconscious mind and influences the thoughts and deeds of the young man in many ways, often so far removed from the cause as to make him deny that there is any connection between them. It affects him in his relations

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with his father and mother and his teachers; it controls his moods of happiness and depression; it influences every thought, while his previous character, previous repressions and complexes, all tend to mould it and make each case original and individual.

All this is of course known to every student of psychology, and is generally accepted indeed by all intelligent and educated people. Few, however, and still fewer religious leaders, have realized its immense importance in the everyday world of humanity, or if tapped, the power it may release.

Buchman had studied psychology to some extent and had grasped the significance of the above facts, without however discarding his Lutheran theology. In his dealings with humanity he had made the discovery that all Nordic men were troubled by their sex tensions, few by their religious difficulties and most of the latter were bound up in any case with the former. He found that if he was prepared to leave his Lutheran theology out of the picture to begin with and tackle each individual as an alienist, the majority were prepared, later in gratitude for what he had done, to swallow his religious point of view without much ado. His success has always been most marked amongst undergraduates, particularly the athletes, army officers, colonials, and evangelicals. His teachings have seldom made much impression on cultured people or the Latin races whose sex tension is different from ours.

He sat, as I have said, with his back to the window that night at Cambridge in 1921. He said very little, making me talk, first generally and then, helped on by a word here and

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there of sympathy or understanding, I began to speak more intimately of my own problems. I spoke as I had never before spoken and was only once to speak again, and that to an alienist friend years after. It was the method of psychoanalysis hurried up and simplified. As I spoke of my difficulties and desires, the tension which surrounded them and made them so much harder to bear lessened, and when I had finished, a great burden seemed to have been lifted from my shoulders. I felt freer than I had felt for a long time, and even much of the despondency which had followed my illness disappeared. Naturally I was very grateful to the wonderful man who had walked into my life, as it were, and removed my cares. He now began to speak in a queer mixture of Yankee slang and evangelical jargon. In one and the same breath he congratulated me with "having crashed right across" and being "converted." He explained that all I had to do was to place myself directly under God's guidance and all would be well.

To do this I must rise in the early morning "and observe quiet time", during which half-hour I must keep a notebook to write down the messages that came from God and then carry them out. Often he assured me I would get such messages—"hunches" was the word he used—to help other individuals in just the same way as he had helped me. By doing this I would not only help them, but also make my own problems easier. The great thing I had to do was to surrender my will to God and all would be made simple.

Enthusiastically I accepted his conditions and promised to start the following day.

Buchman was visibly elated by the evening's success. He

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was genuinely delighted at having helped me and also undoubtedly pleased that the Honorary Secretary of the Cambridge University Rugby Football Club had been captured.

I now became his first powerful supporter at Cambridge, abandoning the first and third Ball at Trinity and going with him to Oxford for a week-end in Christ Church. Here I met Loudon Hamilton who seemed to me in much the same mental condition as myself. I told him how Buchman had helped me and so impressed him that from that moment he has never wavered in his devotion to the cause. He is considered Buchman's second in command in the now large organization of the Oxford Group. Indeed he is so grateful to me that he often tells the old story of my coming to Oxford and "changing" him, though recently he has omitted mentioning my name.

On my return from my Oxford meeting with Hamilton and in the full height of my enthusiasm, I arranged Buchman's first "house-party", which took place in Trinity Hall during the long vacation in the summer of 1921. These "house-parties" have now become quite famous institutions since the "Groups" invaded Oxford in earnest and have taken the name of that seat of learning as their password.

I made the necessary arrangements and invited my friends, and Buchman brought with him a mixed collection of people. There were Old Rugbian Blues, Etonian rowing men, Presidents of the Oxford Union, Firsts in Greats, Naval Officers, Americans, a British colonel, Indians, Chinamen, a famous American lawyer, and a well-

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known English M.P. The two latter arrived rather drunk, but were rapidly sobered down.

On first appearances the task of obtaining the collective confidence of such a gathering seemed impossible. No two at the "house-party" appeared to harmonize naturally. But Buchman not only succeeded in this—so that in a few days it was possible to see Oxford intellectuals walking about arm-in-arm with Cambridge Rugger Blues, and army subalterns with Indian students—but by the end a genuine happy friendliness replaced the feeling of strain which could be felt intensely during the first few meetings.

At first, if the faces of the different people were studied, it was possible to pick out certain types. There was, for instance, the somewhat sullen, heavy-jowled expression of the athletic man, tormented by his physical desires warring incessantly with his religious upbringing. And the haughty rather strained face of the young intellectual with unhappy home relations. Perhaps he and his low-brow father could not get on; or perhaps his mother dominated him and he was struggling for escape from the maternal complex.

Each had come wearing his mask. The significant fact psychologically was, however, that they were there of their own free will. Psychiatrists tell us that if a patient is brought to them under false pretences it is almost impossible to do anything for him. For instance, if the person with the neurosis is told that he is being brought to a heart specialist so as to get him to see a doctor at all and then finds himself with a psychiatrist, he shuts up and says there's "nothing wrong with his nerves", and many weeks may elapse and all his available money be used up before

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he will admit his trouble. If, on the other hand, such a person goes of his own volition to the psychiatrist, half the battle is already won, for on arrival in the consulting room he at once begins to pour out his troubles and soon the point is reached when he can be helped.

Now in the present case, although the "house-party" guests were of many different types, yet all had come voluntarily. In other words, they had already more or less admitted to themselves that they needed help, and had come in an endeavor to find a solution to their problems, whether these were physical or mental.

The general meetings as directed by Buchman had the effect of heightening the strain while at the same time holding out hopes of release to each person. Anecdotes were told of how Buchman had helped other people, similar cases. Everybody was desperately longing to find the solution of the problems which were now no longer suppressed but in the forefront of each mind. So after the meetings, often long into the night, man after man went to Buchman and told his story in much the same way as I had. Others came and talked to people like myself who had already passed through this experience. Using Buchman's method, we assumed the primary *rôle* and listened to the other's tale.

Psychiatrists are trained to treat their patients objectively. With us the reverse was of course the case. We threw ourselves passionately into these new relationships with the result that the most surprising friendships flared up. People who had never unlocked themselves before now threw open their hearts and found to their amazement that there is no greater joy in the world than that of a new friendship. To

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find another soul in a lonely world who feels much as you do, whose eyes shine with affection and gratitude to you is, when first experienced, an almost bewildering ecstasy. It was startling beyond words for the young army officer to find an Indian student with the same problems as himself; even more so for the athletic "blood" to find some young intellectual with the same point of view and able to express for him the locked-up longings of his heart.

By the end of the "house-party" the masks had disappeared from each face and frank happy smiling expressions were everywhere to be seen. Buchman explained all this of course in Evangelical Lutheran phraseology in terms of a personal, individually interested, external God.

To describe the "house-party" as a success would be to understate the facts of the case; it was a very *tour de force*. Each one went away immeasurably impressed. To Buchman himself it was a revelation. He now knew that he had the means of becoming a great leader of the revivalist type, but with this difference, that while those in the past had gone to the lower classes his evangelism was to be for the upper classes. "Reform the leaders of society and you'll reform the world" was one of Buchman's maxims.

This gathering made me more than ever Buchman's supporter, believing what he told me without much question. I did ask him one day a few questions about his theological ideas which had seemed hard to understand beside his practical psychology, only to be told, however, that these fundamental dogmas were too difficult for me yet to understand and quite unnecessary in my present state of development. I was dissatisfied by this reply, but was much too

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strong a partisan to let it upset my whole-hearted support at that time. Indeed Buchman was, and I imagine still is, a very queer mixture. For he combines the most perfect psychological technique with a kind of evangelical fundamentalism. He believed in the Bible as the Word of God; that reading it conferred an actual blessing; and that by opening it at random a message from God, immediately affecting one's physical surroundings, may occasionally be obtained. He believed in the Atonement literally.

These dogmas did not, however, enter into his everyday existence to any great extent, and not at all into his "house-party" discussions, which were almost solely concerned with the problems of sin, and mostly sexual sin. His belief in the power of God to direct the lives of each person in the world directly and individually was for him a very real matter, for he believed quite honestly that his power of conversion, as he called it, emanated solely from this source. As soon as the "sin" problem had been dealt with and the man had "owned up", he (or a whole group) was taught "to listen to God."

No one will cavil with Buchman over the advantages of keeping a quiet time in the day for meditation. All the saints of old have tried to tell of this hard road to revelation in which the desires of the body have to be stilled before the soul can see. However, "listening to God" with Buchman was no such arduous task. All that was necessary was to take a pencil and paper, to sit silently, by relaxation achieve a receptive state of mind, and then write down any thought that came into the mind. If the individual was purged of sin and had "surrendered to God" completely,



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the thoughts which came were direct messages from the Almighty. It was all very simple. There we would sit—five, six, seven, ten or twelve of us—with Buchman in the middle, each with his pencil and paper. The leader would then say: "Let us listen to God."

All would relax themselves in their chairs. The older disciples would begin writing at once, the newer ones hardly at all, and some would sit nervous and uncomfortable. After some time Buchman would look up and terminate the silence with a short prayer. He would then turn to one of the practised groupers and say:

"What did you get?" The latter would reply that he had "got the names of three fellows to get contact with whose names he must not divulge." The next in the circle, also an old disciple, but rather tired that day, would say that he had just "felt a wonderful sense of peace." Then Buchman would come to some new recruit, who would splutter a bit, and be encouraged to do better next time.

Buchman himself and his disciples were perfectly genuine, and believed quite honestly that direct guidance from God was so obtained. But from the first I felt uncomfortable at these times. No doubt, Buchman would say if he read this, that clearly some secret sin had crept into my life which was blocking the vision, or that I had never been altogether converted. Indeed, he always said both these things whenever I attempted to criticize or express my own point of view even in those days. It is a statement to which there is no answer, and one which leaves the person who says it first in the ascendancy every time.

Having become convinced that he had a God given mes-

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sage, Buchman did not easily brook criticism from his followers. On one occasion I suggested to another of his supporters that Buchman somewhat over-stressed the sex side of things. He had just said that a homosexual person had been "flirting with him in Trinity Street", and I had felt that it would require a great deal of perversion to go as far as that, and had said so afterwards. Some six months later I got a furious letter from America on the conversation having been reported to him. He said that I had never really been "converted", he now saw clearly, and that what I needed was "a real conviction of sin." As proof of this he accused me of not having "made contact" with a certain Yale boxing captain whom he suspected of secret vice, but whom he could never get to own up.

As time went on, and as "house-party" followed "house-party" all similar in principle, though somewhat modified by experience, my critical sense once more began to assert itself. On one occasion we were holding a combined "quiet time" in St. John's at 7 a.m.; Glover, the famous Biblical historian, was present. Buchman commenced the proceedings by opening the Bible at random in different places and reading a few sentences. He was not very fortunate on this occasion, and the passages thus automatically selected were not particularly edifying. After a time Glover became rather troubled by this method of Biblical study and suggested quietly that perhaps it would be better to select a definite chapter, read it, and discuss its meaning. Buchman looked up irritably; it was early; not yet 7.15 in the morning.

"Say, Mr. Glover," he replied, "I *prefer* my mixed grill."

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A ripple of pain passed across the old scholar's face, but he made no reply.

Now I began to notice certain illogical and mutually incompatible rules of life which formed part of Buchman's code. He was wont to state that "good food and good Christianity go together", while at the same time holding that tobacco and wine were snares of the devil. He always lived in the best hotels, travelled first-class on transatlantic liners, discussed his food with relish, but neither smoked nor drank wine and encouraged his supporters to follow his example in these respects.

As a rule this didn't worry me, as I was in training all the winter and smoked so little that I never acquired a taste for it. However, after having recovered from pleurisy and when working in London I began to smoke mildly. One day in the late summer I went down to Jordan's where Buchman was staying. It was a lovely summer evening, the ripe corn standing splendidly in the fields, while the sky was clear, the air motionless and full of scent as we sat in the rose garden and watched the swallows diving and gliding high up above the tall trees. We had a very pleasant evening meal, after which I boldly lit a cigarette, though I felt Buchman's eye upon me as I did so, and then sat late talking in the garden.

At last we made a move to retire to bed, drowsy and pleasantly full of the scent of summer air. Buchman followed me to my room and tackled me on the question of smoking. He thought he had only to speak firmly and confidently and, as always before, I would unquestioningly

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obey. He miscalculated for once, however. I became obstinate.

"Why shouldn't I?" I said. "I can see the point perhaps of being an ascetic and mortifying the flesh, but for the life of me I cannot see the point of being half a one and eating five-course dinners, yet refusing the appropriate wines; or the object of being a complete non-smoker."

At first he argued, saying that even if these things were not essentially evil in themselves, that many people were led astray by them, and that it was the duty of every would-be reformer to help the weaker brethren. To which I answered that the same could be said about every single physiological function of the body, and that carried to its logical conclusion such a doctrine would lead to the extinction of the race; that surely, on the contrary, the right course for those whose path lay through the world was to live life to its fullest while obeying the rules laid down by God and Nature. This not being a very profitable discussion from his point of view, Buchman now shifted his ground. He said that the fact that he was a non-smoker and teetotaler often gave him a point of contact with others. People would say:

"Why don't you drink or smoke?" And this would start the ball rolling.

"Surely," I replied, "if you are as God-guided as you say you are, that is a little unnecessary?" Buchman now brought up his last reserves, his trump card. He said he felt sure I had a secret sin in my life which was keeping me from seeing the Truth, that if I were single-minded as he was it would be quite plain. I had heard this too often on previous

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occasions, so I held my ground firmly against his confident and possessive personality.

"Let us listen to God," he said. For a moment I felt outmanœuvred, but then I remembered Harold Begbie once saying that one of the most trying experiences he had ever had was when old General Booth had prayed long, fervently, and loudly that he should "see the light and join the Salvation Army", and how I had thought while listening to the story that after all two could play the same game. So I looked back resolutely at Buchman and said, "All right."

Down we sat in two armchairs facing each other across the bedroom fireplace. We closed our eyes and leant back, assuming a completely relaxed appearance, and remained silent for several minutes. The matter seemed so very clear to me that I hoped genuinely that Buchman would obtain guidance that smoking in my case was immaterial. Such a message, clearly at variance with his prejudice on the subject, would be proof of the truth of his whole doctrine. So I looked up at him hopefully but as soon as I saw the masterful expression of his face I knew what he would say. Buchman then sat up.

"I got a message from God that you were to give up smoking," he said.

"I got a message that I could continue," I replied.

Buchman got up and left the room in no happy or gentle manner. The encounter had been much more formidable than I have been able to express here, and I did not laugh, but from that moment I ceased to believe in Buchman as a new spiritual leader.

He made several further efforts to get me to return to

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the fold. On one occasion, while on a ward round with Dr. Still at the Hospital for Sick Children, I was suddenly handed a telegram by the page-boy.

"Open it," the chief said kindly, thinking it might perhaps contain bad family news or something personal. I read, "Come to tea with the Queen of Greece, Brown's Hotel, 4.30. Frank Buchman." But even tea with the third ex-queen of Greece did not succeed in recapturing my allegiance.

Since those days I have watched the movement grow and prosper, attending Group meetings from time to time. Though some of their cruder early methods have been modified, the main principles have remained the same. The emphasis is first laid on conviction of sin, then on complete surrender of self to God, and finally and most important of all on daily guidance. At these meetings I have been impressed always by the simplicity of the speakers. Recently I attended a large Group gathering and heard a number of people give their story. One white-haired manufacturer described vividly his experiences during his quiet time one morning:

"Go and tell your workmen what Christ means in your life and bring your wife with you," said God.

"I don't want to," he replied, "I don't see what good it would do." But God said, "Go," so he said,

"All right, God, I'll go but I don't see that there's any reason to bring my wife." But God said, "Bring her." He then described how successful the meeting at the works had been when he and his wife had gone down and told the men. He told his story with such charming simplicity

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that one could not help being moved at the time, but on careful thought such a method of dividing the mind into two sections and calling one God and the other self, and then having conversations between the two would appear to be heretical theology and very doubtful metaphysics. To anyone with a knowledge of the workings of the mind such an attitude appears near the border line of the delusional state in which patients are wont to assert that they have seen or heard the Holy Ghost. Indeed the basis of Buchmanism may be summed up as a little too "facile"; though that is not to say that Frank Buchman is insincere or that his Movement does not help many people and do good.

## CHAPTER VIII

### *Yale*

AFTER THE WAR a number of Americans came to Cambridge out of the American Army. Some of them, having entered the University life and come to understand our point of view, felt that it would hasten an understanding of the English-speaking peoples if they could arrange for a number of second-year Cambridge men to visit one of their leading universities for a year, later returning to Cambridge for their final year, during which they could help friendly relations still further. Among such were Harry Davison, son of H. P. Davison, one of the Morgan partners, and Hugh Auchincloss. One day they asked me if I'd come over to Yale as their guest for the following year and try out the plan. I agreed at once, and later asked my tutor, Mr. Harrison, if he minded my going to Yale for a year. He had no objection. So it was settled, and at the end of the long vacation term I obtained reservations on the *Noredam*, of the Holland-American line, with Sherry Day, one of Buchman's disciples, as my travelling companion.

We were late in applying for staterooms, and only able to obtain two berths in an inside cabin, second class. We



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embarked at Plymouth to find the ship already overcrowded, and were unable even to get seats next each other in the dining saloon. I was particularly unfortunate in being placed in a seat at a table whose other occupants consisted of a large Jewish family from Central Europe and some Czecho-Slovaks. Apparently they had suffered greatly from lack of food during the blockade, and all were very bitter about the English. The ship's generous menu, however, afforded them an opportunity of making up for previous privations, and one and all they laid into the victuals with astonishing perseverance, in fair weather and foul. The small boy of the family, a spoilt young man of ten, had the disconcerting habit of being sick after a course or two; unperturbed, however, he would commence the next, his stout and adoring mother handing his napkin and its contents to the waiter for removal, encouraging her little son the while with motherly endearments. Nor was he a nice boy at other times. He would stick his elbows into me and complain to his mother that he hadn't enough room. Finally, when he hit the waiter in the face for bringing him apple tart instead of ice-cream, I suddenly lost my temper and smacked his head. A desperate scene followed—the mother threatening me with a knife, while the friends and relations crowded round to console the yelling little horror. The head waiter only averted a dangerous situation by finding me a seat elsewhere.

Sherry Day is a little man with twinkling eyes and a gentle sense of humour, but he is one of the world's worst sailors. He retired to his berth the first day at sea. Soon he was unable to keep down even water for more than a short

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time, and lay panting in our stuffy cabin with a brown tongue and white-green face. After the third day I felt something must be done. I suggested reading to him to take his mind off his stomach. Literature was scarce, and the only thing I had handy was *The Ballad of Reading Gaol*. He was too weak to protest, and although he still groaned his retching seemed less frequent, so I read it right through. He has never quite forgiven me for this and still refers to it a little bitterly. He did not appear much better for my administrations so I carried him up on deck next day, where he lay in the sun and air and gradually recovered.

About this time I met an American boy who told me he was going to Yale as a freshman the coming term. He was travelling first-class, and from now on I spent most of the day with him on the big promenade deck. We found a darling little American lady, aged seventeen, returning from Paris, with whom we both fell in love at once. She came from Chicago, and though I still possess her photograph I can't recall her name. The three of us spent our last night on the ship together, sitting on a coil of rope in the bows, with our arms around each other as the ship stole silently up the Narrows, casting anchor at last in the early hours. It was a star-lit night, the water phosphorescent and emitting a myriad points of light as the ship's prow cut into it and threw it aside, foaming. The lights of New York began to appear ahead. My companions were very gay. It was a moment of intense thrill for me.

Next morning the sun was shining brightly and the peaks of New York looked completely unreal against the clear

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sky. Suddenly a fast electric yacht appeared. As it approached I saw a figure on its bridge waving, it was Harry Davison. I waved back rather ostentatiously as I was standing on the second-class deck close to the Central European party who now glanced enviously at me. I was taken straight aboard the yacht, round the end of Manhattan and up Long Island Sound to the Davison home at Peacock Point. The visual experience was tremendous, houses towering a thousand feet into the sky, bridges slung across a mile of water, fifty thousand ton liners berthing up against the city itself or picking their way through the noisy traffic of the river, and above all the clear stimulating sunshine. I was altogether overawed and silent. We reached the Davisons' home, it was perfect in every way. They themselves were simple, kind and hospitable but they had so much money that money had ceased to count in their world—anything they wanted was theirs. In the world I had lived in, I and everybody I had known had been always short of money. To us money meant freedom and release, so that here I felt shy and unsure of myself.

After a few days Harry suggested that we should set out for Yale, where if I arrived early and joined the football squad, who were already in training, I would get a good introduction to the University life before the term started. I agreed eagerly and so one blazing afternoon in September, the temperature standing at 85° F. in the shade, I joined the Yale squad in their training quarters.

When we arrived they were at tackling practice. A dummy figure hung from a sort of gallows and one after another the players were hurling themselves at it and car-

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rying it on with them into a bran pit where they fell on top of it with a crash. I had never seen American footballers before and their dress made them appear even bigger and fiercer than they were. Their coach reminded me of the regimental sergeant-major of the Brigade of Guards in physique, language, and deportment. Harry Davison introduced me to him as a Cambridge Blue. I straightened myself up and held out my hand, but was sorry a second later because Tad Jones gave me the welcoming grip of one "letter man" to another and I thought several digits had snapped before he let go. I was sweating all over, partly from the heat and partly from the thought of what was before me, so when a voice said, "like to see the Bowl?" I agreed willingly; my imagination conjuring up a long cool stretch of water. But the Yale Bowl is no swimming pool. We approached a vast stadium and descended into a dark tunnel, emerging at the other end within a huge arena. The ground was like all other football grounds, except that it was divided up every ten yards by thick white lines. Around the field rose tier upon tier of seats arranged so as to encircle it completely and cut it off from the outside world.

"Forty-one miles of seats," said my guide, waving his hand around the arena: "seats eighty-six thousand spectators."

"Yes," I said feebly, "I suppose it does."

"You will have to play for Bull's Bastards; they are all ineligible to play for the University for some reason or other. Men coming to the University for one year are never allowed to play for "The Squad." It might lead to profes-

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sionalism if they were. In your case it's unfortunate, but the rule can't be changed."

"So I am to play for Bull's Bastards," I thought.

"That sounds great to me," I said.

When the practice was over we all went back to the campus together. At dinner that night Tad Jones invited me to sit at his table with the other coaches, the Captain of the team and the other officials of Yale football. I was nervous and felt uncomfortable. I knew my Cambridge accent jarred on them, I knew my clothes looked as funny to them as theirs did to me, and I guessed they were like low-brow athletic people elsewhere, who chiefly talk "shop" and are inclined to resent the intrusion of anything unusual. In consequence as a defence, I talked too much, telling a number of Irish funny stories; they smiled politely but a little awkwardly I felt and when dinner was over moved off quietly. I strolled about for a time and then went back to my room where I sat down moodily, doubting myself, doubting my capacity of conquering this new world and wondering why I had left the world I knew for this strange land of ultra-he-men.

In the weeks following I lived and worked with Bull's squad. They fitted me out for the game with every care and consideration. In spite of these preparations I was not considered sufficiently expert in the "code" to be able to take my place in the field for three more weeks. During these weeks, under the instruction of the saturnine, cigar-chewing Dr. Bull I ran up and down the ground day after day, learning what to do when the complicated code numbers were yelled out by our quarter-back. This training,

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always carried out in the extremely uncomfortable uniform of the football player, was about as pleasant as platoon drill.

The function of Dr. Bull's "squad" was to form an opposition on which the Yale team might practice their ferocity till the latter became sufficiently expert to take the field against Harvard and Princeton. Naturally the Yale squad were bigger, stronger, heavier and better trained than we were. However, I was delighted one afternoon when Dr. Bull at last told me to go in and play left tackle. In a minute I was crouching in the line. Our quarter-back was yelling out a string of numbers. In our code we had to take the first digit of the second number, the second digit of the third, combine them and move off on the third odd number being called subsequently. I thought the code number called was forty-nine, though I wasn't sure if I'd heard aright, and I thought I remembered that on this play I had to knock the opposite tackle over to his left side and so leave a gap for the man with the ball to come through from behind. So I leaped at my opposite number and struck him hard.

He was a thin-faced man called Kelly, lean and hard. He went down with a crash. As he got up he gave me a dirty look. The play failed, and now they had the ball and were attacking. Seeing me in the line and knowing I was a new-comer, the Yale quarter-back "put the play through me." That is to say, the whole Yale side ran at me in a body with the intention of "wiping me out" and carrying the ball on down the field through the breach thus battered in Bull's line. The onslaught was so sudden that I hadn't time to realize what was happening. I tripped up, a Yale man

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tripped over me, the whole Yale side piled up on top. The Bastards pulled me to my feet:

"Gee, you blocked him some," they said; "atta boy!"

"I won't do it again," I thought, trying to straighten my nose, which had been pressed into the ground.

The next play was a drop goal by MacAlridge, the famous Yale skipper, who was said to have received over three hundred letters from admiring young girls during the season. I made a desperate attempt to get at him before he could kick, knocking down Kelly again en route, but my eyes were streaming from the knock on the nose, and I was too dazed to see what I was doing.

"Tackle him you ——," screamed a fat Bastard. The kick went wide. I was mad now.

"Curse you all," I growled under my breath, facing Kelly with blazing fury, ready to knock his front teeth down his throat or break him up, by fair means or foul. At the next play I charged into him like a bull, but he was ready for me this time and I went down with a crash on the hard ground, my left arm twisted beneath me. Numbers of them again fell on top. Something in the arm gave way. I felt sick. When I got to my feet my arm was hanging uselessly from the shoulder; it didn't seem to belong to me. Finding to my surprise it was still attached to my person, I started to walk slowly to the touch-line holding it up by the little finger. As I left the field a sickening, frightful pain began gradually to increase in intensity till it banished everything else from my world.

As they drove me away to hospital every bump of the car sent a thrill of agony through my whole body. It was a pain

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so acute that it could only be borne because it had to be, there being no escape from it. The arm was X-rayed, no bones had been broken but the elbow had been wrenched out of joint backwards and the ulnar nerve pinched between the two bones. A number of blood vessels were also torn across apparently, for the arm went quite black from shoulder to the wrist and swelled up to enormous dimensions.

The grim pain racked me while I lay writhing in agony for forty-eight hours before it began to lessen in intensity. I was placed in the College Nursing Home, where I was given a charming night nurse, sedatives, and very good food. I had quite a number of visitors who brought fruit or ice-cream. Several of the Bastards came round and condoled. Dr. Bull sent a kind message.

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Harry Davison had been quite right; joining the football squad had given me an adequate if painful introduction to the University of Yale, for, on emerging from the Home with my left arm in a sling I found myself recognized as a somebody in the scheme of things. The term was now under way, and at once I set about getting into rooms in College and discovering the best line to follow academically.

The passion of American undergraduates to have a room-mate did not appeal to me in the least. I felt that if I allowed myself to be supplied with a room-mate of my own year—I ranked as a third-year man—the person in question would



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be, in all probability, one who had been unable for some undesirable reason to find a mate among his contemporaries, nor would it be easy to make friends of my own with a third person always present. So I held out staunchly for a room to myself, and in the end was fortunate enough to obtain a perfectly beautiful little bed-sitting-room with a private bathroom, all to myself, in the new Harkness building which had only just been opened. Indeed, I had the honour to be the first student to occupy that room. It had two lead-panelled windows looking out on a court as perfectly designed as any in Cambridge. All the furnishings of the room were of oak, including a great wide open fireplace designed for a log fire. Needless to say, the rooms were central-heated as well. The bathroom was quite perfect, with hot and cold water always available. This was a very great improvement, I felt, on Trinity, Cambridge, where I had to cross the Court to reach the baths which were usually shut when I wanted one. Yet Trinity was one of the few colleges which had any baths at all till well after the war. To splash about in tepid water in a hip-bath after a game of "rugger" was in some way considered academic, and when the idea of proper baths was first suggested in Cambridge it was opposed furiously by the more ancient dons, chiefly on the grounds that they were quite unnecessary. However, the bath question came to a head finally when an otherwise cleanly member of the University football team was found by a war veteran, who knew about these things from personal experience, to be harbouring *pediculi corporis*.

As a medical student of third-year standing at Cam-

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bridge—one who must return and pass the examination known as the 2nd M.B.—it was excessively difficult to fit in my classes at Yale so as to obtain a knowledge of American undergraduate life and at the same time keep up the necessary medical studies. Finally I made a fair compromise by joining the medical school, which, as far as I could gather, was more or less outside the University proper, and at the same time electing to take Billy Phelps's famous lectures in modern drama, and Lewis's in English poetry.

Billy Phelps's lectures were unique; they were much better than a first-class variety turn. He strode up and down and told numerous anecdotes ranging from how he had met the Kaiser in an elevator to extraordinary happenings in Nebraska. His vitality radiated outwards, however, and he made us all read a couple of plays a week and write a critique on one. The best of the latter he read out with comments of his own. His classes were always packed. Reading plays was recreation after anatomy, so I enjoyed Billy Phelps enormously.

He had certain weaknesses not unknown to other great men. On Tuesdays he gave a popular lecture to a crowded house of adoring New Haven ladies who crammed into a huge hall to imbibe culture from the fountain-head. After an hour of this concentrated hero-worship he would come bounding across to the Elizabethan Club and call loudly for tea.

While I was at Yale he decided for some reason to give an honorary degree to Archibald Marshall.

"Splendid fellow," Phelps told me, "has written a grand

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book about your old University." I tried to look wise. I'd never heard of Archibald Marshall.

On meeting the famous author in the Elizabethan Club, I found that he too was somewhat surprised at all the excitement and quite horrified at the prospect of having to give a lecture. Billy Phelps had absolutely insisted on a lecture—of course he must give a lecture. After all, they were going to give him a LL.D., and besides, it was always done. Archibald Marshall admitted privately to me that he'd never given a lecture before.

"But what could I do?" he said. "Anyway, I don't suppose anybody will turn up."

"On the contrary," I told him, "everybody will come. Americans adore lectures."

And so it fell out. The great hall of the University, seating several thousands, was packed from door to door, and when Archibald Marshall and Billy Phelps emerged on to the platform they were met by a storm of cheering. Then the lecture began. Its title, "A Novelist in his Workshop," was not a very inspiring one, but Yale felt that a man with a name like Archibald surely would not disappoint them, and a communal look of happy expectation spread across the several thousand Yale faces when the author stepped forward and, clearing his throat a few times, began to read from a long typescript.

I was in the fourth row and could with an effort just hear what he said. It was not very exciting. For some time the vast audience craned forward, straining their hearing powers in an endeavour to catch a word here and there. The hall was intensely central heated, and soon the fer-

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vour of those behind began to wane. They commenced, not unnoisily, to leave in twos and threes. For an hour I sat, in honour bound, while the author nervously read on. When he finally finished the remnants of the now decimated audience showed their appreciation in the usual manner; "but not, not the three thousand."

After this *début* Archibald Marshall had qualified as a lecturer, and soon found himself signed up for a lecture tour with a manager and all. A rumour reached the Elizabethan Club later that when faced by five thousand lovely girls at Vassar his nerve finally broke, he fainted away, and remained in their sanatorium till his wife came out and took him home.

Lewis was a very different type of lecturer. He was a little, rather wizened man, not very strong looking. On the vitality scale he could not have been much over fifty per cent., but he was a scholar and could teach. Up till this moment, since I left Rugby, my education had been solely scientific—chemistry, physics, botany, zoology, physiology, anatomy, in all their elements, merely lists of names to be remembered. Now suddenly for the first time I became aware of a new world of imagination and beauty. Wordsworth, Byron, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats—we read them all; and Lewis helped us to understand.

At his classes I met a young Yale sophomore and we became fast friends, though in the rush of university life we had little enough time together. My happiest memories of Yale are those of evenings spent with him, sitting by a wood fire while we read to each other or talked long into the night.

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There was a little Irish poem by Nora Chesson which starts, "By the short cut to the Rosses 'twas a fairy girl I met," which for some reason appealed to him and he would always get me to read it before we parted. These moments were all too brief, however, and I would have to hurry away to the anatomy school to get on with my dissection of a "subject" which I shared with two other medical students. Both the latter were Polish Jews—one called Popoff, the other Gompartz. While I worked away on the leg, they dissected the head and neck—a part which I had already studied in the Paris garden. My greater knowledge of the head and neck assured me of a certain respect from these partners, and in their disputes I was always called in to arbitrate. They were working their way through the medical school, they had no money, often they were cold and hungry. To get on, to get through quickly, was everything to them. The head and neck are a very difficult part of the body to understand and remember from an anatomical point of view. Sometimes they used to get very angry with one another over the name of a nerve, or the relation of the carotid artery, or the muscles of the tongue. Occasionally it would come to blows. Once Popoff stuck the scalpel, with which he was dissecting out the windpipe, into Gompartz. I had to interfere and calm Gompartz down, telling him that Popoff was really unwell and not responsible for all he said sometimes, and even if he had cut the vagus nerve, thinking it was the phrenic, what matter anyhow? Touched by my words, with tears in their eyes, they shook hands over the corpse and carried on once more. Popoff used sometimes to get fits. Whether they were fainting fits

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from starvation or real epilepsy we never discovered. It was reported, however, that he was found one morning, after a late night's work in the dissection room, asleep with his head on the corpse's chest.

The Yale Medical School was hard working and very well taught. The main criticism of American university education as a whole, to me a Cambridge man, was that it tended only to teach facts, but not to make you think. As the early subjects in the medical course are chiefly facts which must be grasped before any sound thinking is possible, this fault mattered least in the medical and scientific schools. In the University proper, however, it was very obvious. There were numbers of questionnaires and six-monthly petty examinations always to be passed, but no real final test as to whether you had grasped the subject as a whole. In consequence the student tended to follow a course carefully prepared for him, and as each examination was passed to forget the preceding section. The result of the system was that the average student never learnt how to master a subject by himself and was quite unable to work without the aid of instructors.

I remember years afterwards meeting once more the boy I had met on the *Noredam* on my first voyage to America, now at the famous Harvard post-graduate law school. He was very depressed because he had been given the syllabus, shown a few lectures he might attend and told that he would not have to pass an examination for two years. He was completely lost and quite unable to know where to begin or what to do next. The system has one advantage, however; it eliminates the frightful nerve-wrecking exami-

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nations on which the whole of a man's ability is judged in Europe. Many an otherwise intelligent student cannot pass examinations, and some who can are completely unfitted for the positions opened to them when they have. The American system also, by bringing the teacher into much closer touch with the student than the English, makes it possible for the former to pick out the dullard at an earlier stage. Yale sends away hundreds of young men every year, who have thus been deemed hopeless, before they have wasted years of toil attempting to qualify themselves for positions they could never fill.

Each system has its advantages and drawbacks. In the European the student has simply to satisfy the examiners, the personal factor is minimized, he either answers the questions satisfactorily or fails. The fact that in practice he may be first rate will not give him his engineering or medical degree, but equally the fact that the authorities think him an unpleasant young man will not stop him if he is able. In America the craftsman who cannot express himself may become a world famous surgeon but the irresponsible student who gets on the nerves of the Dean may have his chances damned for ever, though later he develop into a first-class personality.

Coming as I did from post-war Cambridge, full of disillusioned and battered war veterans, Yale undergraduate life seemed extraordinarily juvenile. The fraternities, of which there must have been at least half a dozen, were all graded in importance. To become a member of one of these was the essential hall-mark of the successful Yale man. They were in reality merely clubs with certain ritualis-

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tic initiations. The mystery with which they surrounded themselves tended to add to their importance till it became the ambition of every undergraduate to "make a frat." Indeed, it appeared to me that most people's activities arose chiefly out of a desire to "make" something. Hence numbers of quite unathletic persons became members of Bull's Squad or took up some game although they admitted they hated it. If all other methods failed, Dwight Hall, the Y.M.C.A. University centre, still held out a chance, and quite a number of young men who failed to impress in any other sphere succeeded by taking "Uplift" as their major activity. To get on it was necessary to conform closely to the general point of view, hence the University produced a sort of prototype, like the English public-school boy, "the Yale man."

I soon became a little dazed by the number of activities in which I became involved. I was elected to two fraternities—one in the University proper and one in the medical school. In my case they omitted the rather more vigorous portions of the initiation in which the candidates were actually knocked about, but I saw the whole thing through to the last act.

The initiation business over I found fraternities extremely pleasant clubs where everybody was friendly and nobody took themselves or the fraternity very seriously. My particular fraternity was the senior house of its "order" in the United States and it was necessary for any aspiring group to get our consent before they could become affiliated. Year after year a group from one of the Middle Western towns sent a delegation to plead their cause before us. Their



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spokesman addressed us with great feeling, assuring us that if admitted they would prove "real first-class brothers"; their sentiments were always applauded, they were then blackballed, given a dinner and bootleg liquor and sent home, drunk and sad.

The most paradoxical feature of Yale life in 1921-22 was the University chapel which was compulsory for all members of the academic side of the University though the scientific side were exempt. The church had been built in the ugliest possible manner so as to cater for the most fanatical puritan scruples. It was horrible to look at and the service was as ugly. While the students were still noisily taking their seats the reading of the prayers commenced, and as the latter drew towards their accustomed ending they were drowned again in noisy preparations for departure. I could not help contrasting this "divine Service" with those in the old college chapels at Cambridge, particularly that at King's College Chapel. There all the faith and beauty of the Renaissance had been symbolized in stone and glass. There the service was a symphony, the music blending with the flickering candle light, the red gowns and white surplices of the choir boys, the deep poetry of the ancient prayers and the musty sweetness of the air. There, even agnostics were wont to worship, drawn by its beauty though protesting that they knew not its God.

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"A big game" in America is a spectacle of astonishing interest. This year, however, a special feature was added to

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the Yale-Princeton game. General Foch who was at that time doing a triumphant tour of the States decided to attend. The match was played in the Yale Bowl which as usual was filled to capacity with the supporters of the two sides. The cheer leaders, helped by bands, songs and refreshments from hip pockets, had the crowd nicely worked up into a fine state of excitement before the kick off. Suddenly there was a stir round the entrance tunnel and everybody craned forward expecting the players to emerge; instead, the slight figure of the generalissimo of the Allied armies appeared, supported by a couple of French Staff Officers, President Angel and Ex-president Hadley of Yale. For a moment there was silence. Then with one accord the whole eighty-thousand people rose to their feet and shouted "Foch." As he walked across the ground slowly I wondered if he had ever received such a tumultuous welcome before and what he thought of it all, especially when the Yale cheer leaders gave him a special rendering of the Yale war cry:

*βρεκεκεκεξ Κόαξ Κόαξ ! !*  
(brekekekex—koax—koax)  
Foch, Foch, Foch.

But his face expressed no emotion of surprise or pleasure.

Mass emotion is curiously infectious. If you find yourself in a crowd of Catholic pilgrims at Lourdes, though you be a Protestant, you will kneel devoutly, and pray with the rest. Or if you become involved in a riot against some real or imaginary wrong, you may find yourself yelling and breaking windows with the mob. So here, although I had

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been scarcely two months at Yale and had no reason to love American football I sang, yelled, and danced up and down with the rest, as if I had been born and bred a Yale man.

Yale life was extraordinarily full. From the moment I got up at seven till the following midnight I always seemed to be rushing from one thing to another. Everybody called me Bob, though I couldn't remember half their surnames, let alone their Christian ones.

Gradually my arm had recovered from its dislocation, and to strengthen it and to get exercise I used to box mildly as a rule. The gymnasium had many sides, including a wrestling ring where incredibly muscular men used to lie about, writhing in the most unusual attitudes for long periods of time. The boxing-room was next this wrestling department, and on one occasion we were horrified to see one of the most powerful wrestlers enter our room and ask the coach if any of us would like to have a round with him. He was very scantily clad in tights, which added to his terrifying appearance. His arms were covered with coarse black hair, under which his muscles bulged. His chest would have done Tarzan credit. His face was unshaven and terrifying. Instinctively we boxers began to move towards the door murmuring that it was later than we thought. Just as I was slipping out, Moses, our coach, touched me on the arm, at the same time saying to the gorilla man:

"Sure, Bob Collis will give you a round." There was nothing for it, so back I came, followed by all the other boxers, who now quickly forgot their imaginary appointments. It was quite as bad as I had feared. With a snarl he came at me. I retreated and covered up, keeping my chin well hid-

## THE SILVER FLEECE

den behind my left shoulder. Then he came at me again, more terrifying than ever. I retreated round the ring three times while he swung and struck at me fiercely. Suddenly I felt my heel touch the back of the room. I had no time to side-step as he rushed in, so desperately I put my whole weight and strength into a straight left—I felt it strike something soft which gave way, while a twinge of pain from the jar ran up my injured arm. There was a crash; he was on the ground, his nose flat on his face; he was bleeding like a pig, and his hairs were all sticky with blood. They picked him up and led him, streaming from the nostrils, back into the wrestling-room. Moses was delighted, but advised me not to try a return encounter in the wrestling-room. I didn't.

. . . . .

At Christmas we got about ten days' vacation, the first week-end of which I spent in the Green Spring Valley, near Baltimore, in Maryland. Here two wild Southerners introduced me to post and rail fences, and managed finally to unhorse me when my mount suddenly stopped before a five-foot fence, while I shot over it by myself amid roars of derisive laughter. I never forgot the beauty of the Maryland country, and it was this week-end more than any other reason which made me choose Baltimore as my base when I returned, five years later, to America, on a Rockefeller Research Fellowship.

The remainder of the vacation was spent in New York where for five consecutive nights we went to *débutante*

## YALE

dances. The cutting-in system was new to me and I fared badly. Whenever I met an attractive girl and was getting on nicely she would be removed brusquely. I would pursue and cut in again as soon as I could but I never learned how to get a girl to slip out of the ballroom with me before she was seized by somebody else. At the last dance of the series I had a different experience. I was led up to a couple who were shaking together on the floor and introduced to a girl after the style of Zazu Pitts: her partner yielded her up with obvious relief. We started off together. She appeared to have some difficulty with her feet, which seemed to get locked together if required to go backwards. This was very difficult for her partner, as it entailed his jazzing backwards all the time while looking over his shoulder so as to avoid collisions, and at the same time attempting to carry on a bright conversation.

"Do you know Bud Brewster?"

"No, I can't say I do," I said. "You see, I'm not from this part of the world."

"My, you don't say!" (Silence).

"Do you know Buck Brewer?"

"No, you see I come from Ireland."

"My, you don't say!" (Silence).

"Do you know Biddy Borrow?"

"No, I'm afraid I haven't met her yet."

"My, you don't say!" At each pause I thought desperately of something to say, and once or twice I tried to get on to some new line, but we always seemed to come back to her apparently unending list of acquaintances.

"Ever been down to Yale?" I said hopefully.

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"Sure," was the reply; "do you know Charlie Buck?"

"Hardly."

"I think he's dandy, don't you?"

We had started off at 1 a.m.; by 1.30 we seemed to have exhausted every possible topic; by 2 a.m. desperation was beginning; still we clung together; still I sidled backwards. I looked at my friends in the stag-line with beseeching glances, but they affected not to understand, and just smiled back encouragingly, or turned away apparently wrapped in thought.

Finally, at 2.30, I became desperate; this marathon had gone on long enough, so seeing the man who had brought me to the party I beckoned to him with a free little finger. He took in the situation at a glance. Deserting his partner for a moment he came up to me.

"Wanted urgently on the telephone," he said.

"If you'll excuse me for a moment," I murmured, and disengaging myself I dashed into the gentlemen's lavatory, where I remained for half an hour, fearing to emerge. When I did so the danger was past; I saw Zazu and another young man apparently in a death struggle—her feet had locked again. Did I cut in and come to their rescue? No, sir.

On my return to Yale after Christmas I found myself an established member of the University. I had made a great number of friends in a very short time. To the European, one of the most salient characteristics of Americans is their spontaneous friendliness. Their common salutation, "Glad to meet you," is not merely a catch phrase, but arises from genuine pleasure at meeting the stranger and making him

## YALE

at home in their country. Everybody with whom I came in contact went out of his way to be specially kind. After the attitude of the English University man, who is naturally vague in his social relationships, often to the point of rudeness, I found American cordiality very refreshing. Yale had a charm of its own, and I soon noticed a friendly feeling within myself when I entered the Campus from the town.

One evening especially I can still visualize. It had snowed a few inches, thawed for four or five hours and then frozen, with the result that the snow-covered ground, the pavements, the trees, and even the houses were covered with a thin layer of ice. That night we donned our skates and sped up and down over the frozen surface of the Campus, and in and out of the Courts, shouting as we raced through the invigorating air in the moonlight. It felt good to be young and to have no cares.

At this time the papers were still full of Irish affairs. Before Christmas the Treaty had been signed. I remember the overwhelming emotion I felt on opening *The World* one day in my rooms and seeing that "the Troubles" were over and a treaty between England and Ireland signed. It seemed too good to be true. Now in January it appeared that my fears were not unfounded, and that Ireland's bitter fate demanded yet further suffering before the end.

To me the attitude of the better-class American papers was a revelation. They were detached, critical of both England and Ireland alike. Up to this moment I had only seen Irish news through the medium of the English press, which purposely depicted the present phase of the ancient contro-

## THE SILVER FLEECE

versy between England and Ireland as a struggle, with the benign forces of law and order on the one hand, and gangs of roughs and murderers on the other. Now for the first time I saw the facts depicted without bias, and realized the historical significance of the moment.

Life was full, and would have been very pleasant had it not been for a tiredness that now often began to overtake me in the evenings. Sometimes, unable to keep going I would lie down in my rooms and go to sleep for an hour. I put it down to the amount I was doing, and never remembered my illness of the year before. I caught a very bad cold which left me with a cough.

At the beginning of February we got a few days off from the University, and another student, Arthur Bingham, and I went up to Concord, in New Hampshire, to stay the week-end at St. Paul's School. It was very cold and deep in snow when we arrived, but the sun was shining, so as we needed exercise we set out in the afternoon to climb a near-by hill. Climbing the hill was hot work in the sun, sheltered as we were from the wind, but when we reached the top the sun set and an icy blast from the north caught us, freezing our sweat-soaked clothes, while the temperature fell nearly 40°F. During the evening we both began to feel ill, and neither of us slept that night. We were feverish next day, and thinking we had 'flu and had better not collapse where we were, we set out by the night train for New York.

Next morning we arrived in a very haggard condition at the Grand Central Station, and took a taxi to the Bingham home in East 76th Street. As we drove up Madison Avenue,



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Bingham remarked that New York always gave him a thrill every time he realized that it was his home. I didn't answer.

We retired to bed immediately on arrival, but I was unable to rest because of a most acute pain that appeared to be boring into my right shoulder. I felt most horribly ill though my reserve of bodily strength was still sufficient to carry me along when I wanted to walk.

In a few days Bingham got better, but I got steadily worse. The pain decreased after the first day or two, but I became weaker rapidly. Dr. Bingham, Arthur's father, looked after me. He was one of the kindest and most generous men I have ever met. Soon it was apparent even to me that something was wrong with my breathing. I had a short dry cough which hurt, and I couldn't lie on my right side. Dr. Bingham explained that I had pleurisy, and that there was a lot of fluid inside my chest which must be drawn off by sticking a needle between my ribs, and that he had arranged for it to be done next day.

The following day was the 16th of February, 1922, and my twenty-second birthday. I was to have a birthday party at 4.30 p.m. The operation was timed for 2 p.m. For half an hour I sat up while they pumped out more than three pints of fluid. My shoulder hurt more all the time, I could hardly breathe, I coughed and coughed, and each time the pain got worse. At last they took out the needle and let me lie back on my pillows. Dr. Bingham offered me some morphia, but I refused it then, partly because I didn't want any more pricks for the time being, and partly because I wanted to be ready for my party, so I took ten grains of

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phenacetin and dozed till four o'clock, when the guests began to arrive.

Fourteen came, including Joe Maclay, one of my closest friends at Trinity, Cambridge, and Frank Buchman. These two, for different reasons, regarded each other with the greatest suspicion. All had sent flowers in advance, in true American fashion, and my room was gay with azaleas, and freesias gave out their glorious scent. I had a cake with twenty-two candles. They were all very sympathetic and cheerful, and I believe it wasn't a bad party, though to me their faces gradually became blurred, while I wondered if I could stick the pain in my side till they had all gone. Joe went last at 5.30. I was sorry when *he* went, for he seemed to represent something stable in a world that seemed to be falling in pieces about me. I was tired, in pain, and miles and miles from home. When they had all gone I asked Dr. Bingham if he would give me the morphia now. He came up smiling and gave me the prick in my arm. Then a divine content began to creep over me; first the pain lessened, then it was gone altogether; I became exalted and felt able again to face the world. This was too good to miss after those days of pain and weakness. Besides, I knew it wouldn't last, so I fought against sleep lest I might lose these precious moments of bliss. But gradually the room around me seemed to change. There appeared to be more than one nurse; the flowers began to envelop me; my body floated away; I was free.

When I awoke it was late at night, the sounds of the city were stilled except for an occasional hoot. For a moment I could not recall where I was, or what was happening to me.

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I lay very still instinctively so as not to start a pain which I knew was lurking somewhere in the background. Gradually it all came back—I was in New York; I had pleurisy; yes, I had been aspirated, and then been given morphia, most blessed of all gifts of the gods to man. Now the fight was on again. If only I didn't feel so weak. If only my temperature would settle down. If only that pain would keep away. I said out loud:

"It's only a matter of time, I'll be well soon; but I must not get weaker. It would be ghastly to give out here and die in New York."

I felt very small, in all the world desperately alone, very disconsolate. I looked at my watch; it was 1 a.m.

During the week which followed my temperature swung about, and I grew weaker and weaker. My muscular power faded away till I could hardly stand. It was impossible to rest with the struggle that was going on between my body and the disease; to escape, to feel the normal joy of being alive for a moment; it was impossible to appreciate anything, even to read. I thought to myself:

"This is like lying at the bottom of a well looking up at a faint, far-away glimmer of light but being unable to reach up to it. Dying must be very hard; the body won't let go."

They aspirated me again, but there was less fluid this time, and I knew just how much pain to expect, and I didn't mind. Then they thought it would be best to get me into hospital where I could be X-rayed. So I was taken round to the old Presbyterian Hospital in a car. I found I couldn't walk to it and had to be helped. Ridiculous for me, I thought.

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On arrival in the hospital I was put on a trolley and wheeled along disinfected corridors. I caught myself wondering if I'd ever get out alive, and then I smiled, wondering how many other people must have thought just the same thing.

I was put in a little private ward by myself, which looked out on a red brick building opposite, which went up and up and blotted out the sky.

A student came and took my history, asking diffidently whether I, or any of my relations, suffered from syphilis or tuberculosis. They all examined me from the back of my neck to the soles of my feet. At the time, not having been initiated into the mysteries of Babinski, I rather resented this business of stroking my feet.

I began to feel I was getting better, though the first time I sat in a chair I was so tired after half an hour that I got back into bed again.

One day, while I was still so weak that I could only walk a few paces, my two physicians came in together to visit me. They looked very grave and appeared to have something on their minds. They sat down at each side of me. I tried to tell them a funny story, but they didn't laugh. There was a silence. The senior physician cleared his throat once or twice and then said quite suddenly,

"Collis, as I expect you know, pleurisy of this kind is nearly always tuberculous." My medical studies had not got further than physiology and I was completely unprepared.

"T.B." I thought. "You go to a sanatorium and die slowly." I felt as if I had been hit on the jaw. What I said was:

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"You mean to say I'll never be able to play 'rugger' again?"

That made them laugh and the tension broke.

"Well what does one do now?"

"If I were you I'd get a bit nearer home as soon as you're stronger."

"I see what you mean."

Then I embarrassed them by a string of questions, most of which they parried in the usual medical way. The door closed; I was alone. I sat dumbly, staring out upon the red brick sky-scraper opposite till its contours were imprinted for ever upon my memory. My whole world seemed shattered; I felt helpless and weak, defeated by forces too great for me. It began to grow dark, I sat on in the twilight. Someway the rest of that day passed. People came and saw me and we talked about events and places. All the time I felt a kind of cramp inside, a pain that lay just below the conscious surface of my mind, ready to grip me whenever I allowed myself to think. At last nightfall came and I fell asleep.

Next day when I awoke all the depression and fear had gone. "I'm going to get better," I said.

It was now settled that as soon as I was strong enough to travel I should go down to the Davisons' home at Thomasville in southern Georgia and recuperate there before attempting the long journey home. All arrangements were made for me, my ticket bought and my hospital bills paid. The Binghamms would not even let me pay for the nurses I had had while I lay ill in their house. Not that they were wealthy people to whom money meant nothing; they did

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it simply out of goodness of heart and a sense of hospitality, truly American.

Joe Maclay took me to the Pennsylvania Station. I was only just able to walk through its vast cathedral-like hall and reach the train leaning on his arm. Having got me into my seat, Joe presented me with a clinical thermometer, and a bottle of brandy obtained from the British Consul, said good-bye, and walked off.

. . . . .

We left New York in a snowstorm and ran straight south. As we roared into Baltimore in Maryland it was raining. All night we raced on. Early next morning I pulled up the blind and saw before me a new, strange southern world. Miles and miles of swamp full of yellow water, fields, and forests. Towns, built chiefly of wood, swarming with coloured people.

It grew warmer and warmer. The central heating was turned off. At last we threw down the windows and the balmy southern air wafted into the stuffy carriage. We passed three wild turkeys standing near the line. The train screeched and rocked along. Sometimes it halted, and people got down by the line. We seemed to have left American bustle behind and entered a land where every second of the day was no longer calculated in dollars.

At Thomasville I was met, and driven out to the Davisons' house. It was built in Spanish fashion around a court where orange trees flowered. In the centre a swimming pool of clear water sparkled in the sunshine. Here I was

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given a suite of rooms to myself, consisting of a bedroom, a bathroom, and a sleeping veranda. It was all a little like a dream. About 9.30 a.m. I would awake and ring the bell. George, last with the Coldstream Guards, would appear, carrying a tray on which was laid the most appetizing breakfast—such grapefruit, coffee, porridge and cream, fish, eggs—the chef had come from the Grand Hotel in Monte Carlo. My clothes would be laid out and my bath-water run. Then as time didn't matter I would doze a little longer before getting up. There were lots of good books, so later I would go and sit in the sun and read, while humming birds flashed in and out of the arbour, and mocking birds hopped about chuckling.

As soon as I was strong enough I began to ride. Drowsily on waking I would request for a horse to be sent for me. About eleven a beautiful half-arab would appear, led by a black attendant, and I would mount and ride off into the forests around. The horse had a gentle canter, easier than a walk, and thus we used to wander away into the fragrant woods full of magnolia trees, and strange birds. Occasionally we would put up a wild turkey, or come on a mango swamp in which alligators might be seen pretending they were logs. The southern moss hanging from the trees in long grey wisps made these glades mysterious, sometimes almost sinister. Always it was necessary to go warily on account of the reptiles, particularly the snakes. Fifty rattlesnakes had been killed the year before on the plantation, and I always expected that the horse would tread on one in the long grass or that I should come upon one of these loathsome monsters hanging from a tree when passing

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through the thicker parts of the wood. But I never encountered them. The sun shone every day and the air was like balm to my tired body. I ate and slept and recovered my strength with amazing speed.

Mr. H. P. Davison, our host, the famous banker and president of the American Red Cross, was then dying slowly. Mrs. Davison was looking after him. Sometimes in the evenings he would describe his experiences as a financier; how it had been possible to mould the policies of countries, sometimes almost buying up governments. He told of the power that the possession of money gives—a power more autocratic than kings wield in the modern world, and unfettered by responsibility to anybody. Sometimes he would talk of the war and his sons, the eldest of whom had broken his back flying and was half-paralyzed, but who later was to overcome his disability and become Minister of Air under Hoover and to fly his own plane again, though he could scarcely walk. Both father and son were men of inflexible resolve.

But I was lonely. The others had their own pressing cares and though they were kind to me I felt outside their world. Nor did the occasional visitors help. One, a somewhat hypochondriacal female, on hearing that I was a medical student, at once took me into her confidence and described her various disordered functions, excretory and otherwise, in great detail. I once timed her on one of her non-stop personal monologues for three hours and ten minutes.

One day two lovely girls turned up, one called Peggy somebody. She loved to bait me, till furious, and yet hopelessly attracted, I lost my temper and made myself ridicu-



## YALE

lous. I remember struggling to keep my end up. One night at dinner a discussion was taking place on university agricultural courses. Somebody said even the dumbest students could hope to get an agricultural degree.

"That's a fallacy, they always get stuck on the liquid manures," I said, somewhat unfortunately. Peggy screamed and pretended she was going to be sick. I went very red, choked over my soup and couldn't explain that I was speaking chemically.

The humiliation of that moment was so acute that even now if I hear the word Peggy I think of liquid manure.

By April I was fit enough to travel. First I went up to Yale to collect my things and say good-bye to my friends. They gave me presents, a farewell dinner and came to the station to see me off. I was sorry to leave when the moment came for Americans give friendship more freely than any other race, and the generosity I had met with in the New World, I knew I should never find again in the Old.

. . . . .

Ten days later I landed in Cobh, in Ireland, late one Saturday night, and travelled up to Dublin next day. The civil war was just about to break out between the two parties in Ireland. As we passed through the country we noticed that each station seemed to be occupied by rival military forces, Republicans, Free Staters and British. At Cobh I met a young officer commanding the local Republicans who were in charge of the town at that moment. He had an open face, dark hair, and blue eyes. I liked him.

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"Must you fight any more?" I said.

"We took the oath and must go on to the end," he replied. I parted from him sadly, knowing in some way that I should never see him again.

On reaching Kilmore my family, who had had very meagre descriptions of my illness, remarked how well I looked, for the southern sun and the sea voyage had tanned me. I had no wish to enlighten them and get sent off to Switzerland. So I kept quiet, and in a week or two announced my intention of going back to Cambridge for the summer term and taking my finals.

## CHAPTER IX

### *Trinity*

SO I CAME BACK to Trinity, Cambridge, in May for one last summer term, and in some way I got my old rooms again. Everything was the same. If it had not been for the ache in my side it would have been almost impossible to believe that I had ever been away. After the violence of Yale, Trinity seemed incredibly still. Here life moved almost imperceptibly, like the waters of the Cam passing under the bridges on the Backs.

In Trinity are said to live eight hundred undergraduates, though many are never seen and appear to take no part in the college life. Nobody knows their names nor what they do, nor tries to make them "college conscious." Trinity is unconscious of them. They move about, feed, sleep, and study, but are of less importance than the college servants. Americans used to ask how many undergraduates and how many dons belonged to the college. Nobody knew for certain. It was generally supposed that there must be between one and two hundred Fellows, but what many of them did was quite unknown. It was said that some of the more ancient among them had even forgotten themselves.

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The Mastership of Trinity is one of the greatest academic positions in the world. J. J. Thompson, like those before him, was an exceedingly great man; caricaturists were apt to describe him as he presided over the high table as appearing like some strange Hogarthian figure come to life again in the twentieth century, with a great head covered with masses of untidy hair, often unshaven, his winter pants worn in summer appearing below his trousers and coming down over his boots. Most alarming of all, his teeth always looked as if they were going to fall out.

People said he had split the atom, though nobody felt quite sure what that meant. He said himself he had invented the basis on which all refrigerating plants are made, but had forgotten to patent it. He knew everything from the rules of American football to why the world goes round and round. When he spoke he always shouted a little in a husky voice. He was apt to make asides about people in what he imagined to be a whisper, but which in reality could be heard all over the room. He was so famous, however, that this didn't matter, as having an aside made about you by J. J. was much the same sort of thing as having your portrait painted by John. In spite of these little eccentricities, however, he was unusually friendly for so learned a person; he appeared interested in every form of knowledge, and was generally admitted to be a most courteous host.

Among other famous characters in the college at that time was Dr. Parry, the vice-Master. Courtly, gentle, he knew everybody in the world from the humblest to the greatest, and seemed to have time for all.—And Bevan, the Professor of Oriental Languages, famed chiefly for possess-

## TRINITY

ing the biggest, the oldest, and the most aloof cat in the world. Many years ago he had had a hole cut in his door to enable the cat to pass in and out at will. Some people said it wasn't really a cat at all but the previous owner of the rooms whom Bevan had changed with a charm discovered in some ancient Chaldæan rite. Anyway, when Bevan was forced to abandon his rooms due to college improvements, the cat refused to move and just faded away.—And Simpson, the historian, tall, bent forward, taking fourteens in boots, who had the longest legs of any man in England. When he walked he resembled some unknown feline creature about to spring. He was in Holy Orders. He was said to have described the food at the high table as "poky." Lately he has bought an aeroplane and gets taken up for an hour every evening.—And Lapsley, an American who out-Oxforded Oxford in speech and manner. He wore an eyeglass, and only invited cricket Blues and the nobility to his tutorial lunches. Once he was heard to admonish a scoffing socialist:

"Sir, do you mean to tell me that if you saw a young Duke without his clothes in a group of naked boys you could not pick him out at once?"

—And Harrison, my tutor, who was a man of dry humour. Some unkind person said it was so dry that it was dusty.—And Jim Butler, who was perhaps the bodily representative of Trinity more than any other. Having the most beautiful rooms in the oldest part of the college, whose windows looked out on the Master's garden, the Backs and buildings, all of which were over three hundred years old, he possessed the universal outlook of one who

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has read history, lived in the world, and yet is not fettered to it.

Each was a master of his own subject, each utterly alone in his world, cut off completely from the man in the next rooms, yet an integral part of the whole.

. . . . .

One day towards the end of the term on entering my rooms I found a person sitting in my armchair waiting for me. He was balancing a bowler hat on his knee. He had the shortest legs I have ever seen; his feet were encased in spats. He said, in one breath, that he was a Cambridge M.A. and the Secretary of King's College Hospital, the most modern in London. He asked me which hospital I was going to. I replied I wasn't sure, but I thought Bart's. He then gave me a rapid *résumé* of the unique points about King's, ending by saying that I mustn't believe all I heard about lady medical students. I reassured him on the latter point, and was about to say I'd let him know later, or something like that, when he started off again. He told me that a certain Dr. Burney Yeo, a very great doctor and a great King's man, had founded certain scholarships to attract Cambridge and Oxford men—he said he always put Cambridge first—well, they weren't absolutely scholarships, if I knew what he meant, but they went to the right men.

"Who are the right men?" I said.

"Well, you know, a Blue helps," he said.

"But I am crocked and can't play at present."

"But you will later."

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The figure stated would pay many of my medical course fees. Why not go to King's anyway, I thought.

"Well," I said, "the trouble is I have a friend whom I work with and I don't think he wants to go to King's. As a matter of fact he's not exactly a Blue, but he has played for the 'Varsity (once when the team turned up a man short he had been forced to turn out in borrowed togs at Bristol), and he's really much more the right sort than I am. Why not get Dr. Burney Yeo to give him a scholarship too? Besides, he's just got a first."

In the end he agreed and departed, and I went round and told my old comrade of the anatomy school that he was "a right man" and was going to get a Burney Yeo Scholarship if he would come to King's. He was not at all rich, and the idea of raising the tone of King's and playing a little "rugger," in return for free tuition appealed to him immensely.

A few days later a porter came in and informed me that Mr. Simpson would like me to come across to his rooms as there was a gentleman there who wanted to see me. On entering Simpson's sitting-room, he leapt up and introduced me to an almost completely round person whom he called Tubby somebody—I didn't quite catch the name. The latter told me he had heard of me in New York from somebody I had never heard of, and then, without pausing for breath, for one hour told me about Toc H. He said there had been a club called Everyman's Club at Poperinghe in the Salient during the war, where generals and privates had met on equal terms, and in which there was an upper room where from a carpenter's bench he had served communion to thousands of men who had gone on

## THE SILVER FLEECE

to die. He said that after the war, in the disillusionment of 1919-20, when everything seemed forgotten, the memory of that house and room had haunted him, till at last he had written to the survivors who had signed his old communion roll, with the idea of making the vision he had seen then a reality. He said there were now three Toc H houses, called Mark I., II., and III.; that he was overdrawn at the bank, but confident of the future. Would I come and help him?

"Yes," I said, "I'll come and bring a friend, and live in one of your houses when we come to London in the autumn and try and help you in any way I can."

Again I went around to my comrade in Caius and told him he was coming to live in Toc H with me. He wasn't nearly so pleased as over the Burney Yeo Scholarship idea. He said he was working for his fellowship, and how the hell did I think he could study in a place like Toc H full of hearty fellows. He reminded me that the last person of that sort I'd introduced him to had been Buchman, who had tried in the street to convict him of sin. However, in the end, though much against his will, he gave in to my enthusiasm; so when finals were over satisfactorily, and our last term at Cambridge finished, we found both the problems of where to live and which hospital to attend in London had already been settled for us, and we were able to enjoy a holiday, which we spent partly in Germany, Austria, and northern Italy, and partly in Ireland.

Wherever we went we found the world in turmoil and the people shooting one another. In Bavaria the Ludendorff-Hitler *putsch* had just been quelled. In Austria people were



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starving; in Italy the Fascists were rising; in Ireland the Republicans and the Free Staters were killing each other. Everywhere the killing was being done for Freedom and Patriotism. But these travels form no part of this story, being merely an interlude in the sequence of events, except in so far as they were part of my convalescence. Climbing the Dolomites and living largely in the open air restored my strength, which had reached a very low ebb after the strain of my final examinations at Cambridge, and by the end of the vacation I felt fit again and had almost forgotten the fright I'd got six months before.



## ***PART FOUR***





## CHAPTER X

### *Medical Student*

KING'S COLLEGE HOSPITAL stands on Denmark Hill, between Camberwell of the Cockneys and Dulwich, the most famous of all suburbs. It moved out here some years before the war from the direction of the Strand. The old hospital was famous for having invited Lister to become one of its surgeons. Here the founder of modern surgery had worked, year in year out, producing results never before dreamt possible by using antiseptics. His patients recovered; he was able to open and close the abdomen without sepsis; the

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world was staggered. But not his colleagues. No, the other King's surgeons went on operating in the next room just as before, without washing their hands, in their filthy old blood-stained frock-coats. Years passed and innumerable victims died under their knives before public opinion finally forced them to "scrub up" before operating. I always remind myself of this story when irked beyond endurance by the latent period for the spread of new ideas into old men's minds.

The new hospital is a fine building on high ground with the open space of Ruskin Park behind it. Its wards are airy, clean, and cheerful.

Introduction to hospital life meant for us a complete change of mental outlook. The subjects of physiology and anatomy which had been conquered with so much labour now became imbued with life, and a world of fascinating interest was opened before us. It was necessary, however, to learn the language of clinical pathology before we could understand what was going on around, and thus our first year was spent again in the gruelling task of cramming names and facts into the conscious memory.

Each day we walked the wards following the clinical teaching of our chiefs, among whom was a then elderly physician since dead. He was a master of the old school. His knowledge of pathology was profound. As a diagnostician he was exceedingly sound, making his diagnosis by the art of clinical examination as handed down by the great physicians before him, yet by no means despising modern scientific investigations at the same time. He was a great teacher, a great scholar, a dignified chief, and we

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admired him immensely and listened to every word of wisdom that came from his lips as from an oracle. But we could not love him, for he separated himself from us with a mask of dignified aloofness. To us he appeared superhuman, outside our understanding, and of his real self we had no inkling. From his patients he was even farther removed. Twice a week for two hours he would pass round his wards supported by his house physician, the sister of the ward, and her attending nurses, and followed by a large crowd of white-coated students. He would diagnose each new case, a certain ritual being followed. The student would read out the history of the case and describe what he had found. Then the chief would himself examine the patient, perhaps ask his house physician or the sister a few questions and then sum up the findings, give his diagnosis and an impromptu lecture at the bedside. Once I remember him forgetting that the patient in the bed was still alive. Laying his hand on the abdomen and running his fingers over the edge of the liver, he exclaimed:

“Ah, gentlemen, when later we get this specimen downstairs on the *post-mortem* room table and open the abdomen you will see a very interesting liver, the organ will be contracted in places, hypertrophied in others, presenting certain rounded eminences, a well-known pathological type, though rarer these days—the hob-nailed or gin drinker’s liver.” With dignity he then arose and allowed himself to be led to the next interesting case, leaving the last lying back on his pillows, a little green in the face and with sweat standing out upon his brow, his hands plucking feebly at the bedclothes.

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Having served our time on the medical side for six months we passed on to a surgical "firm." Here our new chief was a great contrast. He was short, bearded, had a protuberant stomach and small podgy hands. In fact he appeared the exact opposite of the tall fascinating man with flashing dark eyes and long tapering fingers who takes the *rôle* of the surgeon in the story books. At this time he had a pretty and charming niece as one of his students, and in consequence became nicknamed "Uncle," a title which exactly suited his benevolent if somewhat heavy manner. Encountered in a West End club, he may have been dull and quite a little pompous, but in his operating theatre he was master. He was more than an operator, he was an artist. He could reconstruct a shattered face or sew pieces of bowel together deftly like an embroiderer. In the theatre we were his humble slaves—whatever we might be outside it. He never operated unless it was necessary. He took infinite care. He was a person to whom you always sent your friends or went to yourself if an operation was necessary.

His assistant (and our other surgical chief) was a very different character, the now quite famous Cecil Wakeley. He was not an artist, but what he lacked in fine touch he made up in energy. He was always ready to tackle anything at any time of the day or night. He was a man for forlorn hopes. When everybody else had given up hope and resigned themselves to a fatal ending, Wakeley would come in raging with energy; the patient would be brought up to the theatre and an operation performed, and even if the patient did not recover, Wakeley at least had done all



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that a surgeon could dare. Outside his work he was just the same, a volcano of energy. Had he been more widely educated and not absorbed by surgery he would have been a superb man of action. As it was, however, he hurled his fearful energy into his surgical work for twelve hours a day, so that he became incapable of other thought. It was grand to see him on a difficult case, working perhaps against time. The more the blood flowed, the more desperate the circumstances, the more his spirits rose. To stand white-coated, gloved, surrounded by his staff similarly attired in the brilliantly lit theatre, amidst the shining instruments, all stillness except for his own voice—this was romance of which he never tired.

He was a *raconteur* of vigorous humour. One of his best tales at that time was an outrageous story concerning a then very famous senior surgeon who during the war had become an excessively great man. As such he simply operated when called in. On arrival in the operating theatre all would be ready for him, the patient anæsthetized, the part for operation cleansed, and all else shrouded in sterile towels. One day he entered his theatre, all was in readiness, the limb prepared, everybody standing by. With calm he made the necessary sweeping incision and cut off the leg at the hip joint. Everything had gone very well; everybody was pleased. The chief said a few kind words; all were smiles. Then a terrible rumour began, and its truth was verified. Who should tell the great man? There was consternation. At last his assistant approached and stammered out that the wrong leg had been cut off. But the chief was grand. "Oh, don't apologize, my dear boy, everybody

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makes these little mistakes at times. It's quite all right—we'll take off the other leg to-morrow." Later, though still somewhat doped with ether, the patient refused to have his remaining leg amputated, but all ended happily for it got quite well on its own.

Gradually we learned the language and became part of the medical school during this first year. We had to work very hard, but we got a lot of fun out of life, for finals were still a thing of the distant future. I and nearly all my contemporaries fell in love with one or more of the nurses or girl students soon after arrival. During our previous education there had been almost complete segregation of the sexes. Now for the first time we found ourselves daily in the company of girls of our own age. Our ignorance of life was as immense as the seriousness with which we took ourselves. We expected them either to behave like men or like the heroines in romantic stories. Our troubles and heart-burnings were really terrible. I expect theirs were too, as their education in life had been as lacking as ours.

By the end of the first year we had become hardened to all the gruesome sights, sounds, and smells of a medical school. Blood, corpses, and death no longer appalled us. Written in a diary for October 16, 1923, I find the following entry: "Took 54 points to *nil* off the School of Mines and sewed up a lady who had cut her throat." In spite of all this our daily personal contact with actual patients in the wards gave our studies a human aspect, though at times it was hard enough to keep sane.

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Toc H, Mark III., was situated in the York Road, S.E.I., between the County Hall and the Lying-in Hospital by Westminster Bridge, on the south side of the river. Its situation alone assured the resident of a commanding position. In our case this was enhanced by the fact that our work at King's College Hospital entailed a journey of half an hour into south-east London, while our amusements led us in the opposite direction across the river.

In Mark III. were collected a number of young men of almost every type, from the aristocrat through the many varying grades of the middle-class to the true working man, though admittedly the majority belonged to the central class bloc. Toc H at this time was in its infancy, consisting solely of three houses in London. Since then it has swept forward, establishing centres all over the world, even in Germany. Then its power still lay in "Tubby" Clayton's mind, as yet only partially expressed. Now that Toc H has grown so large, has so many activities, from sports clubs to dramatic societies, and embraces so huge a membership, the fact that its whole conception was based on a great spiritual experience and no mere "uplift" idea is sometimes forgotten, both by its members and its critics.

Mark III. itself was a poor dusty house looking out on a noisy dirty street. It consisted of a basement where food was cooked and where we ate, a common room above and a large number of rooms used as dormitories in which were from two to six beds. Their furniture was scarce, but they were fitted out pleasantly, if roughly. Washing accommodation was sufficient, if crowded. One small back room had been reserved. It was made into a chapel. Whoever

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decorated it was an artist. It was plain, except for a few benches and a communion table. There was a wooden cross which had been brought back from Flanders, a communion roll, and a round window of stained glass, reconstructed actually of pieces from the shattered windows of the Cathedral of Ypres and arranged so as to represent the double cross of the Flanders town. It faced away from the street. In it there was stillness or as near absolute quiet as can be obtained in London. For even in places where the hooting of the traffic and all crude sounds are shut off there is still always a distant rumble, which is felt rather than heard. Here it was possible to be alone. Indeed in later years, when no longer living in Toc H, I have more than once entered Mark III. quietly and climbed up to the little back room seeking peace from London.

My Cambridge friend and I occupied a small upper room at the top of the house, which we divided into a bedroom and a tiny sitting-room, for we, unlike the other occupants of the house, needs must study at night. He was working for his Primary Fellowship of the Royal College of Surgeons.

By the following summer life in Mark III. had become too difficult for us. Our medical studies and hospital life had reached a point when they demanded our complete attention. Work at night at Mark III. was very difficult, there were so many activities. Also it must be admitted we had become a little tired of being "hearty."

As I have already said, the largest section of Toc H at that time was composed of members of the lower strata of the great English middle class. They are the most class-

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conscious people in the world. Desperately they cling to their position or try to push a little higher up the social scale. To be sure of an "Esq." after their name is the desired end. To them Toc H is a godsend, for here it is possible to call real old Etonians by their Christian names while at the same time not losing caste when recognizing their social inferiors. In spite of these inherent difficulties, Toc H has succeeded to a large extent in its ideal. Though "heartiness" and "uplift" are always tending to appear, yet here can be found a truer fellowship than perhaps anywhere else in England.

By the end of the summer we decided that apart from these reasons it was essential to live closer to the hospital. So we looked about for somewhere to go. The ordinary alternatives were the Student Hostel on Dog Kennel Hill, or lodgings in the same neo-Dulwich area. We decided that even a slum was better than that nether world. Then we bethought ourselves of Cambridge Settlement House in Camberwell, and at once took up quarters there.

Cambridge House is situated close to Camberwell Gate in the Walworth Road, which is perhaps the ugliest street in the world. Not so long ago it was a suburban road leading out into the country. The houses were then set well back from the street with little gardens in front and quite a number of trees. But industrial revolution changed all that. The little gardens were sacrificed when the district became a shopping centre, and long, low excrescences were built out from the houses towards the street to serve as shops. Now down the Walworth Road and the few other parallel north and south main streets

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through the district pours an endless line of thundering traffic, complicated and slowed by numerous clanging, banging, dirty, and smelly trams. Behind these horrible main thoroughfares is a maze of mean streets in which people are herded. There is not one building fair to look upon in that whole area. The sky can seldom be seen; beauty in any form has almost completely disappeared, but here and there a noble tree still lingers in a garden, lonely and covered with soot.

This Walworth district is shut in on itself on every side. It is half an hour's tram journey northwards to Westminster, southwards you may travel indefinitely for hours by tram or bus before reaching anything but a mockery of real country. True, when you pass over Dog Kennel Hill and see the open spaces around Dulwich and the green trees of that district, hope springs up that beyond must surely lie the country. But no, as the tram clangs its way on beyond Dulwich, a new and much more heart-breaking type of suburb appears, and you go on and on, past Forest Hill and its endless lines of respectable little houses, each with a mockery of a garden, and when at last you do reach a green field it is for sale as a building site.

In winter south London was dismal enough, but when the sun shone in summer and the trees were green, the sight of the cobbled streets, the tram lines, the dirty houses, the sweating people in the bright light appeared almost too horrible to be true, and filled one's soul with bitter loathing and an unutterable longing for the country.

Cambridge House was an oasis in this desert. It consisted of several houses knocked into one. The little gardens

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in front still survived and in them stood a number of tall trees. Behind was an old garden with a big ash and an ancient fig tree. The latter still produced little green figs, defiantly, with an almost humorous disregard for its surroundings. In the house lived a number of Cambridge men who, like ourselves, worked at different jobs during the day and at night came back and ran the boys' clubs, the library, the Camberwell Model Parliament, and the other activities of the place. It was much easier to live here than in Toc H. There was no strained atmosphere, no heartiness, no uplift. We were a very happy crowd, respecting each other, living our own lives.

Camberwell belongs to the English Cockney. There are few Jews or foreigners in this district. Of all the English the true Cockney is the most invincible. He maintains a gallantry and an inimitable sense of humour against almost impossible odds. He looks out at life with a sort of humorous defiance. Indeed, unconsciously he expresses in his person the divinity of man. Above all else he is kind. Once they fined a man half a crown in Walworth for ill-treating a goldfish. If this consideration for weaker things were only for animals, it might be some similar perversion to that seen in certain country houses, where dogs and horses take precedence over the children and servants. In south London, however, kindness to one another is the greatest characteristic of the poor. Living like ants, in surroundings of frightful overcrowding and squalor, they seem ever ready to aid one another. Indeed, I found that readiness to help had become an established order in their world.

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One day while standing beside the Walworth Road waiting for a moment to rush across its stream of crashing traffic, a small person, aged some seven years, called up to me:

"Tike us across, mister, caun't yer?"

"What's that?" I said, not quite hearing.

"Tike us over the street, caun't yer?" She put a muddy paw in my hand, stretched out the other to a smaller brother, who again in his turn attached himself to a still smaller toddler, and off we set across the street in line. The busmen slowed up and yelled to us cheerily as we passed, "Careful now." Where else in the world could this happen?

People are apt to say that the Englishman is stolid and unimaginative. Whether this be true or not of the great backbone of England, its vast middle class, it is certainly false of the Cockney. For of all attributes which require imagination, kindness needs it most. In Camberwell, with all the foulness of its horrible ugly streets, there was a grandeur in the struggle of man to live, but in the vast suburban area beyond, life seemed almost extinct. From out of line after line of similar houses in Forest Hill, Tooting, Peckham, Lewisham, and all the rest, pour each day innumerable men in bowler hats, who wend their way to some business or office, and return at night. Day after day, year after year, they follow the same routine, clinging to their respectability and wrapping it round them as their defence. The men at least escape to their offices daily, but the women remain in their small domestic circle, their horizon bounded by *Home Chat*, local scandal, food, and the iniquities of the domestic staff. Pettiness is the



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essential essence of this suburbia, and fine distinctions in social status. As you grow more prosperous, so you move south from Camberwell, till at last you retire into glorious isolation in some semi-detached villa where nobody speaks to you for fear of losing caste, and from where you can no longer speak to your old companions for the same reason. The rungs of society here are very particular and everybody else's business is your own. In the lower strata of this middle-class mass, the people, though dull, are yet quiet; they live decently and don't annoy anybody else. It is the upper middle-class man of the suburbs who really makes life hard for others. He is low-brow and proud of it. He is suspicious of everything he can't understand; he regards all people who do not fit into his world as Dagos, Niggers, bloody Americans or Wild Irishmen. He speaks of the English working man as "a swine." Not content with being the most uncultured of all creatures, he flaunts his ignorance and tramples truculently on all who dare suggest other ways of life or thought. This frightful atmosphere is so strong that it flows out into English life from these suburban homes, destroying all culture as it goes.

King's College Hospital, standing on the border of this grim area, could not escape. However, a Blue is something — divine to these persons, like a sacred bull to a Hindu. I found myself therefore treated with respect and even admiration:

"May I introduce Collis, the old Cambridge Blue?"

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Before taking my finals there was an interlude of one month during the winter, when I went over to Dublin to do my midwifery at the Rotunda Hospital. This famous hospital had a curious beginning in the eighteenth century, for its imaginative yet humourless founder conceived the unique idea of housing in one building a maternity hospital for the poor women of Dublin and an assembly room for the fashionable set. Stranger still, he actually carried out his project, erected a fine Georgian structure of cut stone, and ran the maternity hospital on the proceeds of the assembly rooms. The latter consisted of a large round domed edifice lit chiefly from above and placed so as to face down Sackville Street, which had just been laid out at that date and was said to be the widest street in Europe. Beside it the main hospital building was erected—three high storeys surmounted by a tower. Since then additions have been made, wings built, and the hospital modernized in many respects, but still the old stone corridors remain and the original wards with their rows of beds, each of which contains a mother and a newly born baby in a cot slung at the foot. Above each patient a coat of arms is painted on the wall. Many of these are now too faded to be made out clearly, though the name of the eighteenth-century gentleman, whose gift the bed was, can usually still be deciphered. Since assembly rooms are no longer the vogue they were, the governors of the hospital have allowed the old round room to be converted to the more modern requirements of recreation, and now a cinema occupies the front portion and the Gate Theatre the back, so that still the inspiration of the founder is carried on.

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The winter of 1923 was one of the grimmest in Ireland's history. The civil war had been fought out to its bitter end. In its last desperate phase the whole north end of Sackville, now O'Connell, Street had been blown up or burned down. The Four Courts were a shell, and much of Dublin was in ruins. The leaders on both sides had been killed by their old comrades, leaving bitterness, hatred, and disillusionment behind. In the Abbey Theater Séan O'Casey cried:

"Don't blame God! What can God do with the stupidity of man?"

But birth, death, and rebirth go on in spite of us, and "trade" in the Rotunda was brisk that December. I shall never forget one scene. I was called out about 2.30 in the afternoon on Christmas Eve to attend a woman in labour about half a mile from the hospital. My companion was a Scottish student. It was his first case, and he had taken a few whiskies to keep his heart up.

We arrived at a house directly behind the ruin of the Four Courts. It stood in a line of mean dwellings, some of which had been battered in the recent bombardment. We mounted a rickety stair to the third floor and entered a back room which looked out on a blackened crumbling wall which had once formed part of the rear portion of the Courts. The sky was grey; already the light was going. Dimly we saw a woman lying on a crumpled bed; there was a great smell of dirt and sweat in the room. She was groaning.

"She's very bad," the handywoman said.

I examined her. "Stay here," I said to the Scot, and getting up I ran back to the hospital and fetched a doctor.

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While we worked the Scotsman leant against the mantelpiece, silent and motionless. The baby was born at last; it was dead; it had been dead for days. The doctor looked at the woman. "I'll get her into hospital; stay till the ambulance men come." I heard him shut the front door as he went out. I began to collect the instruments and things. Then I put on my coat and approached the woman to have another look at her before leaving. It was nearly dark in the room now, the little red lamp under the picture of the Sacred Heart burned dimly, lighting up but a few inches around it. I seized her wrist and took her pulse. The beats were irregular, then they got slower; suddenly they stopped. I looked down at the girl on the bed, and through the dim light I saw she was dead. I looked up; two ambulance men had come in, their red uniforms looking black in the dusk. They looked at me.

"She's dead," I said.

A young man from somewhere behind ran into the room. "What did you say?" he said.

"She's dead," I replied.

He screamed and fell down by the bed; then he got up, caught her hand, and begged her to come back. The room was now filled with people. Somebody led him out.

"You wouldn't blame him," a woman said. "She's only nineteen, and him but twenty-one and a Free State soldier too."

I was standing at the foot of the bed. The ambulance men were at the head. Somebody said we'd killed her. Pandemonium broke out. Suddenly an old woman entered with a light. She had a high white forehead, prominent

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nose and cheek bones, and deep-set eyes. Her whole face was framed in a shawl draped over the head. There was silence. Quietly she put down the candle. She motioned to the people; they knelt down; the ambulance men took off their caps. She began to recite the rosary. Now she cleared the room of people, cleared up the blood from the floor, and tidied the bed.

"Come on," I said to the Scot, who still stood by the fire.

"Right," he said. We went down the creaking stair. Somewhere the man was crying, his sobs filling the whole house. We opened the door and walked out into a crowd that filled the street, carrying our maternity bags. They made way for us silently. It was raining.

Nothing can daunt medical students, however, and the Rotunda mess was very gay that Christmas. Dances, Christmas shows and entertainments of all kinds at night, and work all day, filled the twenty-four hours for us. Another King's student had come over from London with me. He found the diet of tea, bacon, and eggs eaten at irregular hours too much for his digestion. The humorous Irishman that he had been taught by *Punch* to appreciate and despise, on closer acquaintance proved a fake. He hated the smelly slums and dirty back streets. Old Georgian Dublin did not appeal to him. Flea-bitten, tired, and constipated, he thought Dublin a "bloody place" and longed for Leeds. I was glad that he left as soon as his cases were taken out, for back in Dublin I felt an inward content that I had not known for years. Till fourteen I had lived solely in Ireland, absorbing into my subconscious mind a million images—the garden of my childhood, the sound of the sea, the smell

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of burning turf, Dublin dirty and Dublin gay, beauty that hurt and dirt that smelt. In my veins ran the blood of my people, Norman Irish. They had fought on all sides in all the old Irish wars. More recently, for the last hundred years they had played a prominent part in Irish medicine. Both my grandfathers were Dublin surgeons. My father's father had cut his finger while doing an operation in the early days of antiseptis. The patient recovered, but he was dead within forty-eight hours. Half Dublin went to his funeral. My father, one of the strongest men I have known, was thus left with little or no money. But so strong was he that he combined working in a lawyer's office as an apprentice, his law schools in Dublin University, and Rugby football, with such effect that he not only got the gold medal in the law school, but won his cap for Ireland at the same time.

Then I was sent away to an English public school. There, year in, year out, I had been expected to behave and think as a typical athletic public-school man should till I had become one outwardly. Inwardly, however, there was always a mental conflict which made me restless and unsettled. Now suddenly this ceased as I walked about the streets of Dublin, watched great acting in the Abbey Theatre, rode from Delgany up into the Wicklow mountains and saw again brown streams bubbling through ferny glens, exquisite, wild, mysterious, possessing a secret just beyond the mind's reach.

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On my return from the Rotunda I found myself faced by the Final Conjoint examinations in the immediate

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future. These examinations, which are among the most trying in existence, are held by the boards of the Royal Colleges of Medicine and Surgery. Hundreds of students from all parts of the world take these degrees. The examiners have a very hard time, for it is difficult to examine students in practical medicine when their training up to that time has been largely theoretical.

By day we worked in hospital attending clinics and classes, at night we came back to Cambridge House and pored over our books. We all became very much on edge; life now to us meant simply finals. Nothing else mattered. Our love affairs all ended badly; we all jilted the girls; it hurt them and it hurt us. But we hadn't time to think of them except as relaxation. If they expected more, so much the worse for them. Some of them did understand and were very sweet; others, little hussies who were out husband-hunting, went about trailing their broken hearts and talking about honour.

It was a nightmare summer. The examinations themselves were gruelling in the extreme. Herded like animals, we went in one after another to the oral examination. The examiners grew more and more tired and the students more and more nervous as the day wore on. In my final *viva-voce* I was saved by a great piece of luck. An Ulsterman friend, whose ordeal had taken place before mine and who had been utterly routed by the examiners, staggered out of the wrong door into the waiting queue. Recognizing me, he came up and told me what had happened. He said he had been faced by two ancient men, one with a wart on his nose. He could do nothing right. He was given a urine to

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test. He thought he had tested it for everything, but apparently "the old devil" wanted him to smell it, and said, "they always smelt it first in his day and he didn't know what was coming over the world these days." Then the other examiner had handed him a bit of stuff that looked like a slab of cheese. He had been quite unable to tell what it was. The examiner had told him that it was a melanotic sarcoma whose primary growth had come from the back of the eye.

A moment later the bell rang. I went into a large room in which were five or six pairs of examiners sitting at different little tables. I approached one of these, experiencing as I did so a feeling of intense discomfort in the solar plexus as if I'd been punched in the stomach. I felt sick. I knew I couldn't remember anything. They always asked you such ridiculous questions about things you'd never seen. You couldn't please the old blighters. I found myself standing in front of a table.

"Sit down," one of them said. I sat down.

"Test that," he said, pointing to a pot of urine. I got up, my hand shook so much I spilt some of the stuff over his trousers.

"Take care," he growled. Then suddenly I recognized the wart on his nose. I began to sniff; he didn't look up. I sniffed more loudly; he continued to read the paper in front of him. I went on sniffing for what appeared fully five minutes. Suddenly he heard the nasal snuffle and looked up. Gradually a smile lit up his face.

"By Gad, sir, you're the first person who has done that to-day." I thought he was going to kiss me. We chatted



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for a few minutes amicably; then I went on to the other examiner. He handed me a large, flat, cheese-like thing.

"What's that?" said he.

"Melanotic sarcoma," said I.

"Right," said he, beaming.

"Where was the primary growth, do you suppose?"

"Possibly at the back of the eye, sir."

"By Gad, you're the first person who has answered that to-day," said he. He nearly shook me by the hand. As I walked away, I heard the old boys say:

"Bright chap, No. 606, eh!"

"Even if he doesn't look it."

By the end of the summer we had all got through. We couldn't believe it to begin with. We felt we didn't know anything and that we knew everything at once. We were qualified doctors. It was a moment of superb relief; the tension broke and for a time we were free of worries.

## CHAPTER XI

### *Rugby Football*

**T**HE ATTITUDE OF THE ENGLISH to "games" and "sport" has puzzled, sometimes annoyed and always amazed the rest of the world. André Maurois has described it with humour, Keyserling with contempt, both with a kind of envy. English games have now been taken up by almost every country in the world, except perhaps Tibet. In Turkey you are liable to arrest if your shorts are not properly white, in Russia if they're not red. But for all that nobody yet understands the English attitude. In an American university you play football, not to enjoy yourself, certainly not as recreation, but to become popular—a somebody. The point of the game is to prove that Yale can play football better than Harvard. Hence the main object is to win. Expensive coaches and trainers are engaged and the squad is drilled into as fine a machine as any specialized unit of a modern army. To a lesser extent swimming, running, rowing, baseball, golf or tennis are taken up in the same spirit—to become a champion, to run faster or jump higher than any man before. In America if you are not good at a game you tend to be ashamed to be seen playing it badly.

## RUGBY FOOTBALL

In Germany games are a means of making the nation more physically fit. Hence games are encouraged. The Japanese play games to show the world that they can *darned well* do everything better than everybody else.

The English play games for recreation. Any modern psychologist will tell you that the best way to rest the mind beset by the tensions of life is to find some simple pastime so absorbing that the mind cannot think about anything else while concentrating upon it. At sports, particularly violent team games, though also while riding or at golf or tennis, etc., this is accomplished to perfection. The young man troubled by the tensions of sex, home life, or examinations, finds peace from his cares playing football. He may arrive at the ground so tired and "fed up" that even walking seems a nuisance and life not worth living. Then he changes into fresh playing clothes, steps on the ground briskly, and for an hour becomes completely absorbed in the game. Then, his muscles pleasantly exercised, he bathes in hot water and drinks quantities of tea while he discusses "games shop" with his fellows in complete content. The tired business or professional man forgets the stock market or his worrying cases while he struggles with his ball in a bunker, or watches its flight after a good drive. More than this, many of man's primitive instincts such as the joy of battle, or the desire to be part of a herd, which are so often frustrated in the modern world may be satisfied at games.

The English, and also, in a slightly different way, the Irish, Scottish and Welsh discovered this truth subconsciously, and thus "games" were invented. The Celtic nations play with more excitement and violence than the

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English because the desire to experience the joy of battle runs in their blood, but all play primarily for recreation. True, with the super-organization of everything in modern times many highly paid professional cricket and association football teams have appeared in England, but still for every professional side there are a thousand village or small town teams.

Rugby football is the game more than any other of which this analysis is true. It is the most unprofessional game in the world. At Cambridge we had no professional coach or trainer. The great international matches between England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales are unique in sport for the casualness in the organization of the teams. The fifteen best players in each country are selected by an honorary committee. In spite of the fact that often more than fifty thousand spectators come to watch these matches the players have no preliminary practice. Each player turns up from his respective residence, in different parts of the country, the day before the match. A Captain is chosen by the committee to lead the team. There is seldom any discussion before the game regarding tactics. The following day these fifteen men, who may never have played together before, take the field to represent their country. True, in these great encounters the players and spectators mind who wins—indeed sometimes the crowd becomes almost hysterical, but any attempt to drill an international team before hand would be utterly opposed by public opinion.

These players, who are called “internationals” are accorded considerable fame and popularity and the gaining of an international cap, though it hardly brings quite the

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same social recognition as a "Blue," yet is the honour most ardently sought after in the British and Irish athletic worlds. But even so the international player will tell you that it is the joy of the game rather than anything else that he delights in.

Perhaps the most remarkable fact of all is that in London there are nearly a hundred Rugby clubs which turn out five or six teams every Saturday afternoon. The first teams of these clubs play to win to some extent and their members may get some athletic fame, but those in the lower teams play on indifferent muddy grounds without spectators, and nobody ever hears whether they win or lose or cares what happens to them. Yet week after week the group of young students, apprentices, newly qualified doctors, lawyers and business men who comprise the team—Tooting extra-B—meet and play together against rivals as undistinguished as themselves.

It is not surprising, therefore, to find the London Hospitals taking a leading part in the "rugger" of the capital. It has always been a somewhat curious fact that the hospital teams play more ferociously than any others. It is due, I think, to the fact that medical students, interns, residents and post-graduates are all engaged in cramming more facts into their heads than their memories can hold. They are experiencing frightful sights, smells and every awful form of physical horror for the first time, they are making the acquaintance of pain and suffering. In fact, they are living a life of extreme tension. Hence it requires more than a mild pastime to relieve their minds.

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Shortly after joining King's College Hospital I found myself captain of their Rugby club and remained so for the rest of my time in London.

King's College Hospital had only about 250 students and post-graduates, including women, at this time. Notwithstanding this we turned out three football fifteens and two or three hockey elevens every Saturday afternoon. The third Rugby team consisted of men who had never played the game before, those who were prevented from becoming really fit due to strenuous hospital intern appointments, and ancient slightly "winded" post-graduates. The intellectual standard of the team was high but their physical prowess was exceptionally poor. They were known affectionately in the hospital as "the Beagles." They never won.

The first team was a very different matter. We had Cove-Smith, the then All-England international Captain, MacMyn of Scotland and a number of other famous players. The ferocity of some of the inter-hospital cup matches was almost ludicrous. Before a certain match I remembered I heard that the St. X's team had decided to lay out Cove-Smith, MacMyn, and myself—the three King's internationals—early in the game and then march to victory through the remains of the King's side. "Let 'em try," was all Cove-Smith said, and we three wore our bright red United Hospital stockings to make ourselves even more conspicuous. It was a wild game. Just after half-time unfortunately I had to fall on the ball. They kicked me so hard on the head that I was unconscious for a minute or two. When I was coming round I heard Cove-Smith say in my ear: "All right, Bob, I've got his number." It was number

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12 of the X's side. After this I played in a haze, but Cove-Smith led the side for me and MacMyn ploughed his way through them. Both came out unhurt. We won by sixteen points to nil. Number 12 fainted on the way to the pavilion. He had been dealt with satisfactorily, and we went back to our hospital dressings and ward rounds in great spirits.

To be fit, to feel really well, to play continually before large, cheering crowds, to be recognized and pointed out in the street, to be rung up by the evening papers and asked your opinion on problems of the day, and see yourself quoted along with the Archbishop of Canterbury, Tallulah Bankhead, Jack Dempsey, Marie Stopes, or Mr. Baldwin, is very gratifying to one's personal vanity. Playing for Ireland was something more to me than just getting "a cap." There was the pure achievement and satisfying glory after years of failure, but there was something else as well—"Ireland" they yelled as we came on to the ground at Lansdowne Road, and for a moment we were Ireland to that vast crowd of our fellow-countrymen. It thrilled my imagination beyond the possibility of analysis.

From all the matches I played in, of all the great moments when I have lived most, the day when Ireland and England drew at Twickenham in 1925 stands out.

It was a keen February day. The sun shone, the wind had a nip in it, it was an ideal day for a big game. The Irish team lunched together at Richmond; our elderly supporters, the old internationals, ate large chunks of beef-steak, the players mostly cold beef and rice, coffee with plenty of sugar. My father, who had played for Ireland forty years before, swallowed his beef-steak and felt strong

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enough to take the field. We didn't talk very much, for already that feeling of weakness in the pit of the stomach that all athletes know had set in. We felt quite weak, as if the strain of running a hundred yards would tire us out; our eyes were slightly dilated, our pulses beat fast, we could feel our hearts thumping. We were all disquiet in mind and body, so we sang a few bawdy songs with good tunes. We marched out proudly to our waiting bus in the narrow Richmond street, while a large crowd gathered and gaped. Then we were off, threading our way slowly through the queue of vehicles. I looked out in a sort of dream at the Twickenham crowd in which I had so often walked to the ground myself. It seemed unreal now to be one of the actors. The people stared at us, some waved, we looked back through the glass stupidly, the bus driver hooted continually, we sang another song, "Come all ye gay young fellows," our spirits rose. We arrived, dismounted from the bus, collected our bags and entered the enclosure behind the huge west stand, and were immediately surrounded by crowds of autograph hunters, friends, acquaintances, and press people. We went in under the stand to our changing room. The air was electric with the expectancy of the thousands already above us. We started to change, while privileged supporters, selectors, and messengers came in and out. Some stripped naked and lay down to be massaged, others put on their bright green jerseys, clean white shorts, and club stockings, and stood up stretching themselves, sat quietly without a word, or got up and sat down nervously. Now each of us began to feel that glorious sensation of absolute fitness and muscular power. In each of



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us the lust for battle was rising. . . . Time to go out to be photographed. As we emerged from the tunnel into the sunlight a great cheer went up from the now vast crowd that shut us in on all sides and was raised high above us. We looked up at the fifty thousand faces round about trying to pick out our friends, but all looked the same. Smoke rose in clouds from countless cigarettes.

There were women there too, lots of them, but women had ceased to count in our world. Soon they would be asking silly questions of irritated males, each of whom would be projecting himself into the *mêlée*, a primitive fighting man for the moment. We liked having them there, no doubt, but well out of the way, for this was a man's job, "the combat," even if we were only acting it in modern dress.

Some royal personage now shook hands with each of us, walking down the rows of players. As his hand was gripped by each nervous muscular giant and shaken heartily, a slight spasm of pain could be seen to pass across his face. Long training in the modern privileges of royalty and a fine sense of duty, however, enabled him to endure to the end, though it seemed to me he looked wistfully at his crumpled hand while the English Captain led three hearty cheers.

We went back to our underground changing room for a minute. It seemed like an age: the crowd above were stamping their feet. I felt the muscles of my arms, hard, I hugged myself. I leaned against the wall, half shut my eyes, and began to wander off in imagination till I became a spectator rather than a player. Into my reverie broke a voice, calling:

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“Now, *Ireland!*”

We filed out of the changing rooms; there was a stir in the crowd; then as we reached the ground a great roar met us, a second louder roar, and the English had come on after us. A moment's hush and the ball soared up and fell among us. It was kicked back into touch, the game had started.

At first it was just a great game, but as time went on both sides warmed to their work. It was like playing in a continuous roll of thunder. No spoken word could be heard on the ground. Soon we had forgotten the fifty thousand spectators, forgotten who we were and everything in the world save the battle we were engaged in. We leapt at each other, dragging our opponents to the ground, fought like bulls in the *mêlée* by the touch line, ran through the air, fell tackled, scrambled up, kicked, fell on the ball, received tremendous blows, gave others. All the time our blood sang through our veins with a glorious *joie de bataille*. Suddenly Kittermaster, my Rugby school friend, who felt none of these things, the queer aloof creature with a superb body who only played “rugger” when he was forced to, slipped through and raced down the field. We dashed out, full of resolve, but the English centres were through us again, and before we knew where we were we were back behind our posts once more. Now we went out to battle, a long pass went to Smallwood on the English wing. I just got him with a low dive as he was starting off about the English 25 line. Horsey Brown was up; we kicked the Englishman off the ball. We dribbled it right in under the posts. In the rush to touch it down Horsey ran

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into the post and was stunned. Then it was half-time. The Irish team got together; "Forwards, you must rush them right off their feet when the whistle goes." We set our teeth. The ball landed in the hands of the English scrum half, but we were on him, carrying him, the ball and all, twenty yards down the field till a huge English forward hurled the whole lot of us into touch with one mighty charge. But on we came, down the field, a man fell on the ball, we kicked him off, another went down, a scrum formed, we slipped the ball back, Sugden, our famous half-back, feinted twice, sold the dummy, threw a long pass to the wing three-quarter; he raced over. Back to half-way amid a roar of triumph from every Irish throat in England. Off again; once more we did it, scoring far out—"All square!"—a man died of excitement in the stand. The crowd had gone crazy, and the roar rose and fell like waves about us. Grimly now we fought on. I was nearly spent, I had been knocked on the head and kicked in the mouth. It was nearly time; we made one more frantic effort. Down to their line we rolled them and held them there for five minutes, but cross it we could not. Man after man was tackled within a yard, nay, within an inch of the line. We were done, the English broke through our attack, back to half way, back to our 25 line, back to our goal line they pushed us. Under the posts we scrummed. In the loose Cove-Smith picked up the ball. I lunged into him but went down with a fierce hand-off, striking the post. It had checked him a second though, he was over the line but couldn't touch the ball down, for "Jammie" Clinch had him by the throat. I rose on my knees and clutched part of him;

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we lifted him, fourteen stone and all, off the ground, bent him backwards, fell on top of him and held him fiercely. The whistle blew. The English got the ball out, the scrum half threw out a long pass to Kittermaster. It didn't go quite straight, we were on him before he could move. The ball came loose. It landed in my hands, I kicked it. As I did so, a huge, vicious forward struck me, knocking the remaining wind out of my body. I went down dizzily, scrambled up drunkenly, the ball had gone into touch. The whistle blew loudly. *Time*, 6-6, a draw, honours easy, Ireland, England. The crowd broke on to the ground from all sides; we were surrounded, lifted up on shoulders, beaten on the back. Strange Irish faces appeared, and gaunt hands reached up and shook ours. People whom we had not seen for years or were never to meet again appeared for a moment and were lost. The cheering went on. At last we reached the pavilion, battered, dead beat, but completely, blissfully happy, at peace with ourselves, utterly content for a moment in time.

Next day, sitting in Cambridge House I read the *Observer*. On its front page it described the game as one of the finest ever played.

"If from two such fairly matched sides it is not invidious to select individual players we would like to pick out Corbet and Locke, the English centres, and Brown and Collis among the Irish forwards as the outstanding figures in the game."

I was content, and from now onwards I played solely for the joy of the game, and my mind began to think of other things and other worlds to conquer.

## CHAPTER XII

### *House-Physician*

**R**ESPONSIBILITY has the most sobering effect upon man; the most irresponsible oppositions tend to become staid and respectable a few months after assuming the reins of government. Nowhere is this influence stronger than when it is exerted on the newly qualified doctor. Before the event he may have been a not very sober student; loud, inclined to street rags, often unshaved, and a great trial to his associates and relations. Then one afternoon, after standing in frightful suspense for hours, he suddenly hears that he has satisfied the examiners. He walks away a little dazed; gradually the full import of what has happened begins to dawn upon him. He is a doctor. He now possesses a vast power. Moreover, the world regards him as a helper, expects him to heal, above all trusts him. Next morning he gets up and shaves carefully, dresses cleanly, and assumes a quiet dignified manner; perhaps he overdoes it a little and puts on a bow tie and makes himself a little ridiculous.

At first the resident hospital officer is somewhat of a menace. He knows nothing but theory, is hysterically

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thrilled by everything, and if not very clever may be overbearing to those under him. Much depends on the tact of the sisters, particularly the night sister, at this time. King's was fortunate in possessing a night sister of great knowledge and consummate tact. Every six months she broke in a new team of residents. In some miraculous manner she managed to convey to the ignorant young men the right orders to give her in any emergency. I have seen tremendously important young men dealt with so well that they swelled with pride as they gave her her own suggestions as orders. She never smiled, but just got on with the night's work.

My first resident appointment was that of house-physician. From the beginning of my medical course I never essayed to be a surgeon. I recognized, I think, that I was not good with my hands. I hated the thought of further examinations in anatomy and I disliked standing in the damp, hot atmosphere of the operating theatre hour after hour. The great attraction about surgery lies in the fact that, like all other crafts where the worker uses his hands, it is peculiarly satisfying to the mind. If a life is saved or a patient healed it is you who have done it by your skill. Compared with this the physician's life seems hard and dull. He must ever be struggling to disentangle the intricacies of difficult problems of mind and body. He cannot use the direct method of the knife but must attack with much less sure and definite weapons. He must be scientific and human, objective and subjective all at once. The world regards him as a mystery man with infinite power of healing, infinite knowledge; infallible, honest, incorruptible. He

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may have to fool it, but he must not fool himself. It is the most difficult job in the world.

Of all the years I spent in London these summer months as house-physician were the happiest. I became fit and well; the work was not so strenuous as to tire out one's body and make life a drudgery, as is often the case in resident medical appointments.

The residents, both male and female, slept out at night. I found a solitary flat roof on to which I wheeled my bed. Most of the others pulled their beds out into a courtyard and slept there. One night Cove-Smith, on coming back late from the theatre, found a somewhat formidable lady doctor asleep in his bed, with her tousled head on his pillow. It was a delicate situation. Simply to get into her bed and go to sleep might lead to misunderstanding amongst his less Christian colleagues next day. To rouse the lady suddenly might lead to a worse interpretation. It was one of those situations which even a muscular Christian finds it hard to solve. Indeed, I never heard how he did solve it, for everybody in the medical school I met next day had a different ending to the story.

The residents' mess at this time was friendly and amusing; indeed, it was an absolutely new life. As a medical student you had been regarded as a joke—often a bad joke—by the patients, a nuisance by ward sisters, and a poor fool by your chiefs. Now everything was changed, your chiefs trusted you and gave you much responsibility; you and the sisters were allies, each helping the other with the changing daily problems of the ward; with the patients you occupied a unique position: you were a doctor to them, possessing all

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the mystical healing of the physician as handed down through the ages, yet a young doctor, still close to them, still approachable, one to whom they could talk. I remember how depressing the wards seemed at first; bed after bed filled with people apparently dying with horrible incurable diseases, their faces pallid or yellow, their eyes sunken or full of pain, some coughing, others groaning, others vomiting all their food, others unable to control their motions, hardly a normal face among the whole twenty-six in the ward. But as soon as the strangeness had worn off we found ourselves in a world in which the usual barriers that shut in each soul had been broken down, and here, if we were but a little understanding, it was possible to pass beyond the confines of ordinary human relationships.

Two experiences I had during these months are worth recording:

A girl of my own age had been admitted to one of the semi-private wards of the hospital under one of my chiefs shortly after my appointment. On admission she looked splendidly healthy, but was found to be suffering from a rapidly growing internal malignant tumour. No operation was possible; slowly the growth increased and her health faded. Month after month she lay in hospital growing weaker; as nothing could be done and as she was inclined to ask questions to which there were no answers my chief saw as little of her as possible, leaving the management of the case very much to me. With me she was different; she never asked questions and seldom discussed her condition, preferring to talk of other things. Gradually we became friends, trusting one another, though we seldom spoke



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about other than general topics. For months she lasted. Then the end came suddenly. It was early morning, the hospital porter was standing by my bed: "Wanted in Sambrook Ward, sir."

I put a white coat on over my pyjamas and went up to the ward. Instinctively I knew what the call meant; I went straight to her bed. In these semi-private wards the beds are divided by curtains, so that though the smell and sounds of all the patients are communal yet it is possible for each to cut herself off from general view. In one of these curtained cubicles about half-way down the ward I found her propped up on pillows. Her face was pallid, the eyes sunken into the sockets, the veins in the neck were pulsating visibly, there was a little sweat on the forehead, her hands wandered about the bed. She looked like a hunted animal at bay.

"What's going to happen?" she said. "Tell me."

"You're going to die," I replied. This was the first direct question she had put to me in all the five months I had known her.

"When?"

"To-day or to-morrow."

"Oh, please let me go to-day. Promise. Don't go giving me stimulants that aren't any use."

"All right."

"It will be nice."

Her sister, who was a nurse at the hospital, came in and sat down on the other side. She grew weaker. The weakness was very hard to bear. We moved her out of the main ward into a side room. Her people were sent for. With a

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great effort she rallied herself, got the nurses to wash her, brush her hair, and dress her as gaily as possible. I filled a syringe with a dose of morphia to ease her pain.

"What's in that?" she demanded.

"Morphia."

"Thanks, but wait a bit till I've seen Mum and Dad."

We waited. Her big blue eyes never left my face; she held my hand as I sat on her bed. They arrived and stood at each side. I got up and went across the room. I noticed one wall had a smudge half-way up, and that there were two wheeled chairs and a table with a doll on it in the room. I looked out of the window; the morning sun was just catching the top storeys of the hospital, showing up their gaunt brick outlines and black drain-pipes. There was a glimpse of green beyond in Ruskin Park. I heard the conversation behind me as in a dream. It reminded me of the many parting scenes I had so often witnessed on the pier at Kingstown. A crowd of lovers, mothers, friends, and acquaintances pressing against the chain railing of the pier and calling across the space to some one standing in the other crowd on the ship's deck. Each alone in a crowded world; each trying pathetically, hopelessly, to be cheerful, making quite meaningless remarks about nothing, calling out jocular instructions, re-giving messages to friends on the other side. Suddenly the ship begins to glide away, a silence falls, is broken by a few cries, handkerchiefs are waved, usually some idiot yells something and somebody shouts back, "What?" Everybody else looks angrily at the fool, but really they're all rather pleased because his silly noise breaks the straining tension of their minds. . . .

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"You'll be better soon, dear, I'm sure."

"Oh yes, I'm sure I will."

Silence.

"That's a nice shawl you're wearing. Is it the one I knitted for you?"

"Yes, it looks well, doesn't it, Mum?"

"The sun's shining outside."

"Oh, so it is; it should be a nice day."

Silence.

"Well, I suppose we must be going. The doctor said we mustn't stay long."

"No."

"Well, good-bye, dear."

"Good-bye, Dad; good-bye, Mum."

I heard them kiss her. I heard the door close. I looked back at her; she was quite white except for her blue eyes; she was biting her lip. She looked at the syringe. I took it up and came over to her.

"Promise me you'll stay," she said.

"Promise." I gave her the morphia then. Quickly it began to act. The lines of pain left her face and she nestled back on her pillows in comfort. I sat on her bed with my hand between hers. She smiled at me in peace. Then she began to get drowsy. Her eyes closed once or twice. She smiled again; the smile remained but the eyes were shut. The breathing got deeper. Her grip on my hand relaxed. She passed into a deep sleep, then into unconsciousness, but I sat on as I had promised. . . .

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The second experience was less intense but no less vivid. As my predecessor was taking me round the women's ward for the first time, we came to a bed in which a girl of twelve years old was lying flat, without even one pillow.

"This is Elsie," he said; "you'll like her, she's an interesting person." I looked up and saw before me a lovely child. She had small chiselled features, mobile lips, pale fair complexion, and fair bobbed hair, but when you looked at her you only saw her eyes, which sparkled with a dazzling brilliance now quite beyond my powers of description. She was suffering from rheumatic fever which had affected the heart. It made her very weak, and often her pulse rate would become so fast that rest was impossible and she would toss about hour after hour in a restless weariness. She was just too old for the children's ward and so had been put with the women. Here amid rows of elderly people dying of cancer or suffering from other chronic diseases she had to lie week after week, while treatment forbade even one pillow. She became very unhappy and used sometimes to sob for hours while the disease progressed and her heart grew worse. We tried every sort of treatment without avail, she grew weaker and still more unhappy. We all tried ways to comfort her, but her childish world was far from us, our words of sympathy seemed meaningless; we could not reach her, she seemed imprisoned. Then insomnia became added to her troubles and she would lie awake at night silently, her eyes following us as we did our night rounds. Finding her thus one evening I decided to try and put her to sleep by suggestion, using a method I had practised

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humorously at Cambridge but never used seriously before. To my surprise she went off to sleep at once. Remembering that suggestions made during light sleep are supposed to be retained afterwards in the unconscious, I now suggested to her that she was getting better, that we cared for her and that she was going to be happy in the ward. Then I suggested to her that she was going to fall into a deep sleep and not wake till the morning. She slept all that night and awoke next day in radiant spirits.

Each night for five nights I repeated the experiment, and each night she fell into a deep sleep, not waking till the morning. She never cried again. She became happy and contented, and now the barrier between us had vanished and I could somehow enter her world. I became ridiculously fond of her, discovering in her the queerest mixture of childishness and ancient wisdom. The most extraordinary part of the whole affair, however, was that she now began to get better quite rapidly. Soon she was able to sit in a wheeled chair. She became the joy of the whole ward, going from one old person to another, holding their wool, prattling of her childish thoughts. Finally she was well enough to leave the hospital, and Sister Kate and I went down to the gate with her to see her off. We all three parted in tears.

A hospital ward will be just a room full of sick people, a torture chamber, or a temple of hope for the distressed, depending upon the sister who rules over it. If she be starched in mind as well as in clothing, though all arrangements may be perfect—the correct cubic air space per

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patient, the floor dustless, the brasses shining and the nursing efficiency itself—yet each person will be as alone with his or her hopes and fears as if in solitary confinement. If she be a woman of sex repressions expressed as sadist tendencies, then it may become a very hell; the rules made for the patient's good may be so construed as to cause a thousand little irritations; the staff nurses will be harried and the probationers chivvied; every male student will be regarded as a potential seducer of pretty girls, and the physician and his assistants separated from the patients as by a barbed wire fence. But if in spite of years of hospital routine she remain human, a spirit of loving-kindness may be found here as nowhere else. Sister Kate belonged to this rare group. Human she was indeed. Sometimes she would lose her temper and for a whole day every one would have to slip by on tip-toe, avoiding her ferocious eye; once she lost her temper with me and retired into her room banging the door. She could not bear humbug, and pretentious young house-physicians were inclined to find themselves mocked, but she had a heart of pure gold and a sense of the ludicrous which never deserted her.

One evening, when I was on extern duty, a young woman turned up in the casualty department suffering from pneumonia; she was carrying a baby at the breast. Clearly she was a case for admission, but what were we to do about the baby? The matron said it was against the rules; that the house-governor, a gentleman who was known among the students as "the slug," would never permit it. So I went to Sister Kate. She took them in without a word. The baby was placed in a wicker laundry basket with a large lid,

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which stood in the middle of the ward. Everybody entered into the game that ensued. When the matron came her rounds the lid would be closed down. If the young man objected vocally to such close confinement, the matron lost all auditory sense and appeared oblivious of anything unusual. The women of the ward and Elsie took it in turns to look after him. The breast milk was drawn off from the sick mother and all went well. Indeed, while he lodged with us the ward was a very happy place, though sometimes feeling ran high as to whose turn it was to be nurse.

At the end of these six months I transferred to a new department in the hospital, becoming house-physician to "Nerves and Children." Two more opposite specialties could hardly have been combined. Nothing is more hopeless than a ward filled with neurological patients; there is no treatment for the vast majority, and slowly, almost imperceptibly, they grow worse, gradually losing control over their voluntary and involuntary muscles, till at last they present the spectacle of a human spirit imprisoned in a living but functionless body.

At that time there were many patients suffering from the after effects of the sleeping sickness (*encephalitis lethargica*). Their hands shook so much that they could not bring food to their mouths, their muscles became so stiff that they could scarcely move, their faces assuming a mask-like expression, due to rigidity of the facial muscles; they could no longer show the emotion of joy or sorrow; saliva dribbled from their mouths. Some remained lucid to the end, others became confused, light-headed, or had hallucinations. One of the latter kept a strange creature which he had created

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in his mind on the foot of his bed. Sometimes he would take it for walks about the ward, leading it by a string and calling it by endearing names the while. He assured us it was not a dog or a cat, and that if we could see it we should be very much surprised indeed. After a short conversation with him the reality of our universe seemed as questionable as his. He was a disturbing philosopher though he knew it not.

As there are few treatments possible for these conditions, neurology resolves itself into a matter of diagnosis. The game is to find which particular nerve in the brain or spinal cord has been damaged and the site of the lesion. The patient's knees are tapped, his feet are stroked, his tummy tickled, his calves pricked, his eyes moved from side to side. He is stood up and told to shut his eyes, and caught when he falls over. The students stand around fascinated. Finally the neurologist pronounces the verdict: "Subacute combined degeneration."

Everybody is amazed. Even the patient looks pleased at hearing what's wrong with him at last, and perhaps summons up enough courage to ask how long he'll be ill.

"Oh, you'll be all right, my man," the chief says as he moves off; but adds in an undertone, "Give him some bromide, Collis."

One of my chiefs at this time was Kennier Wilson, the world-famous neurologist—a brilliant diagnostician with a witty tongue and an uncanny quickness of thought. His clinics were a joy to the students.

"If one allowed oneself to think," he said to me, "one would go mad."



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The work in the Children's Ward was in marked contrast to the neurological side of my new appointment. In this department therapeutics is the order of the day, for almost every case is open to treatment, and the majority can be cured. The work from the physician's point of view is fascinating, combining as it does difficult diagnosis, science, and active treatment. Sometimes it is difficult and heart-rending, but no other branch of medicine presents the same compensations to the mind. A children's ward, however, is no little heaven filled with happy children, whose big eyes are brimful of gratitude. All day, sometimes all night, they wail. Here the nurses' lot is a very hard one, for there are always smelly napkins to be changed and awful looking scrofulous infants to be fed.

At a medical conference we were once discussing unusual causes of sudden death in infants. Many frightful situations had been described, and we were all feeling very harrowed, when our Scots chairman said:

"Gentlemen, I will tell you of another unusual cause. Once in one of my wards seven babies cried day and night for ten days; then the night nurse took a hammer and silenced them."

The extraordinary thing to the male is the amazing patience that women seem to possess with children. They appear to be able to do all this drudgery and yet maintain infinite kindness even when quite tired out.

George Frederick Still, whose resident I now became, had started as a children's physician thirty-five years before. He had broken away from the previous tradition of the general physician with a side-line in children's diseases and

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made the study of the child his sole specialty. He was the first true children's physician in England, possibly in the world.

Coming from St. Austell in Cornwall, he had read classics first and then medicine at Cambridge. When he started in London he was literally penniless. He is reported to have replied to an inquiry as to how he did the year after he took up children's diseases only:

"Oh, I doubled my income; I made £2." Sometimes he was so cold that he had to get up and go out and walk up and down, not having sixpence for a scuttle of coal. Once the sole of his shoe had to be held on with string. He was often hungry, but he stuck to his resolve and in the end succeeded. A disease was called by his name; his book was acclaimed all over the world. His private practice is said to have reached £10,000 a year. He was made professor of pædiatrics—children's diseases—in London. But the struggle had left its mark. I don't think he had any intimate friends. On being asked on one occasion what his recreations were he replied: "My work."

Though short, his appearance was arresting. He had a magnificent head with dark eyes sunk in deep sockets below bushy eyebrows, a high forehead, black hair and moustache turning grey, a tanned complexion, a kind mouth and a strong chin. He always wore a short black coat, a high stiff collar, and a spotless hard shirt. His manner was always the same—courteous, yet implacably reserved. He never told a funny story. He never wanted to hear one. Indeed, so completely did he shut himself off that conver-

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sation with him was extremely difficult. Meeting him at the hospital door, I would accompany him along the corridors towards the ward while he questioned me about football, a game which he had never played seldom watched, and in which he was completely uninterested, or I would discuss the fishing prospects with him, having never caught a fish in my life save perhaps a mackerel behind a rowing boat off the Irish coast. Thus we would approach the ward; the swing doors held open, we would pass in. Then always a sudden transformation took place, his face lighting up, his step quickening, his eyes flashing, he would wave to the children, they would stand up in bed and wave back. He would turn to me full of questions about this investigation and that. Coming to a cot he would examine the child with quick nervous hands, the students and post-graduates standing around. He would teach; tabulating, describing, quoting from his memory. He seemed to possess an inexhaustible knowledge. Teaching over, he would go round alone with me and the sister, puzzling over the difficult cases. Sometimes he would become engrossed in some problem, discuss it, argue it over with me and himself, forget where he was. He couldn't bear to see a child hurt. If one of them had to be pricked or a needle put into its chest he would stand by, hopping nervously from one foot to the other. The sufferings of the children under his care appeared to hurt him personally. Once I got him down at midnight to see a child with acute abdominal pain. Very quietly he came into the ward. As the child lay asleep, he slipped a hand in under the bedclothes, felt the abdomen,

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and made his diagnosis before the child awoke. A few minutes later a surgeon came in and tried to examine her, but she cried and resisted. Still intervened and took the child in his arms.

"Now," he said.

In a minute she ceased to struggle and allowed the surgeon to examine her. The latter got up puzzled. "What do you think, sir?" he said.

Still announced his diagnosis; nobody questioned it; the matter was settled. There was to be no operation that night. (The diagnosis was that of primary pneumococcal peritonitis, perhaps the most difficult to be sure of in the whole of medicine.) When the surgeon left, Still remained for some time, going from bed to bed talking to any of the older children who had wakened up. I looked at his face; the reserve had gone; it was happy, smiling. After midnight he left, but hearing a child wailing as he entered the lift he again returned to the ward and stood troubled by the bed seeking some way to relieve the pain. At last he came away. As I accompanied him to his car he talked to me like a companion in arms, almost like a friend. Next day he was once more wrapped in his impenetrable reserve.

He lived alone and never married, but the children of the world were his children, and in them he lived and will live always.

I was privileged later to be his last resident at the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street. His time was up at the end of the year. For thirty-five years he had worked there. It was the field of his greatest battles, victories, and triumphs. As the end approached he decided to

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finish quietly a few weeks before the actual moment when his time was officially up. He told me; I let the sister know and also shared the news with Sheldon, the medical registrar. He arrived for his last round, a little more nervous than usual, a little more reserved. As he entered the ward he paused for a moment and looked about him. The doctors and students paused behind him. Then he passed to a bed and began to lecture to the twenty-five students and post-graduates who stood five-deep behind. For two hours he passed slowly round the ward, demonstrating, teaching; at four o'clock he approached the last bed. The sister, Sheldon, and I began to tremble; he looked pale. We came to the last bed. He gave his last directions.

"Thank you, gentlemen, that is the end."

He raised his head and faced the students fiercely. They faded away. He walked to the basin and began to wash his hands. Nobody dared speak. The sister who had served him faithfully for years had been making up her mind desperately all the afternoon to ask him for a photograph. She opened and closed her mouth several times; she moistened her lips with her tongue; no words came.

"Good-bye, Sister."

He suddenly held out his hand and shook hers.

"Good-bye, sir."

Sheldon and I led him out to the lift. Nobody spoke; we went down. In the hall we stopped.

"Good-bye," he said.

"Good-bye, sir," we replied desperately.

Suddenly John Poynton, his "next in succession," ap-

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peared. He came forward with the most extreme embarrassment of the Englishman at such times; he had come down from Harley Street specially; Sheldon and I turned about and without looking at each other disappeared quickly in different directions. Poynton took him home.

## CHAPTER XIII

### *"There Is a Tide——"*

ON COMPLETING MY TIME as the house-physician to the Children's Ward at King's I went on, as I have said, to become Dr. Still's resident at the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, and left southeast London for the more stimulating atmosphere of Bloomsbury. Up to this moment I had fought my way from one examination to another through the medical course, while living the life of an athlete without much thought for ultimate eventualities. The immediate test ahead had always seemed sufficiently difficult without bothering about the distant future. Now, with the change of scene, I began to look about me and wonder what next. One day Sheldon, who was my immediate superior, said to me:

"You ought to get down and do some real work while you are here, get some interesting cases together, publish a paper, and take the Membership exam."

I was surprised. Nobody had ever suggested before that I had any intelligence. I was rather pleased and flattered too.

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"Not a bad idea," I replied, and without a word to anybody, I commenced to work.

The examination for the Membership of the Royal College of Physicians of London is one of the hardest tests in existence. The syllabus covers the whole of clinical medicine, much pathology, and quite a number of extraneous subjects as well. It is taken chiefly by those wishing afterwards to specialize. Only about one-third of the candidates are usually admitted. Soon I discovered that I had embarked on a desperate enterprise and one along quite new lines for me. The post of resident filled the whole day with exhausting routine work, leaving only the evenings for study. Night after night I read for three to four hours with grim determination, sitting in a narrow polished sitting-room whose sole furniture consisted of a table, a chair, and a horse-hair sofa of the Victorian pattern, ugly and comfortless.

There I sat till my eyes ached and my brain was fit to burst with the facts I stuffed into it. The shrill voices of the children playing in the street outside, the smell of the room, and the view of the houses opposite wove themselves into the lines of the book I was studying so vividly, that even now if I take it down from my shelf the whole scene flashes into my mind. I don't remember if the sun shone that summer. I scarcely lived. Everything was subordinated to the desire to master the huge subject and pass the examination. It became a passion and filled my whole life.

Suddenly the week of the examination arrived. It consisted of two long written papers, at the end of which were little Greek, Latin, French, and German unseens for trans-



## “THERE IS A TIDE——”

lation. There was a long three-hour clinical examination in a ward, and a number of orals. In spite of the fact that we were treated with consideration by the examiners, the whole thing was a refined form of torture to me. I awoke on the morning of the first day with a feeling of internal distress, infinitely more agonizing than anything I had ever experienced in my most exciting athletic days.

I shall never forget the final oral examination. After waiting in the big gloomy library of the College of Physicians for about an hour, desperately walking up and down, I realized for the first time what “cold sweat” means. Like many other readers of exciting descriptions I had often read that the hero was covered with cold sweat when the shark turned over on its back and bared its long pointed teeth, etc. (This is perhaps the only occasion I could have chosen when a hero couldn’t be covered with “cold sweat,” but no matter). Ordinary hot sweat is refreshing, smelly if heavily clothed, no doubt, but health-giving none the less. Cold sweat serves no purpose; it just moistens the surface of the body while making its possessor appear pale and sickly.

Suddenly my name was called. I tottered through a door into a smaller library where I found the President seated on a high chair before a long table, around which were seated the four Censors of the College and the Registrar; all were robed. I was motioned to a chair. The President got up and bowed to me. I only saved myself from missing the seat as I sat down again by clutching at the table. The President then asked if any one would like to ask the candidate any question. Somebody asked me, “What electric current would kill?”

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I was so taken aback at the question that I opened and closed my mouth several times before I was able to say, "Five hundred volts."

It was a pure guess. The questioner looked at the other examiners, all of whom avoided his eye. It was clear that nobody in the room knew whether my answer was correct or not, so we passed on to a discussion on what I should do if I was suddenly called upon to aid an elderly club-man stricken down with gout at 2 a.m. The examiner drew a really harrowing picture of the sufferer, but, even so, my endeavours to alleviate his pain were not very convincing.

They seemed tired of asking me questions at last. A silence fell. Then suddenly the President turned a dreamy eye upon me.

"I shall ask you one question," he said. "You are aware that automatism and dual personality are not the same thing?"

"Absolutely different, sir," I said, though I hadn't then nor have I since discovered what he was talking about. He then went on to ask me a question about epilepsy, to which I made some reply, was told that I could go, and found myself sitting in the next room without any recollection of having exchanged seats. The Secretary of the College was smiling at me.

"That will be fourteen guineas," he said.

"What! You mean I failed?"

"No, you've passed."

I threw a cheque at him; dashed out of the room, down the stairs, and out into Pall Mall. For a moment I stood wildly triumphant; then I looked up at the leaden sky; the

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buses boomed by; nobody noticed me; I walked on along the street a little way; had a cup of tea somewhere. I began to feel unutterably tired; I started back to hospital. Climbing on to a bus I sat down on top and looked out at the theatre signs in Shaftesbury Avenue without enthusiasm. Now I felt a burning desire within me for something, I knew not what. I only knew I didn't want to celebrate my success in the usual way.

As I arrived at the hospital the porter handed me a letter from my friend, Brian Cullen, whose home was amongst the Manx hills but whose life was spent on an office stool in a cotton broker's office in Manchester. He wrote:

*A scent or a sound or a half-caught word,  
And always the sound of windless rain  
Bring back my hills and my mountain sides;  
Oh God, I wish I was back again.*

*The mountains will now have a sombre hue,  
For they're not yet caught by the coming spring;  
But the sky will be clear and the sea deep blue  
And the streams will chuckle and laugh and sing.*

*Just for a second I seem to fly,  
When I see the moon through a cloudy sky,  
And always the sound of windless rain  
Will give me my hills for a second again.*

“This isn't poetry, but it expresses how I feel. The lad on the next stool here asked me to-day if I mucked about much with girls. This city rains dirt. Come to Ireland next

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week-end if you can. I'm going over to play football."

Quickly I arranged to play in a match in Dublin the following week-end also, and got leave from the hospital.

I had lived shut up in London so long that I had become accustomed to tram lines and all that goes with them, till a road without petrol fumes, a field without a house in it, or solitude for one moment of the day seemed strange. As I sped northwards in the train I looked out at the country, seeing things I had looked at many times but never seen before. The fields of Northamptonshire, one of the dullest counties in England, seemed really beautiful. I noticed how the green of a field varies in places from yellow to emerald; how big trees, standing in hedgerows, seem to have a divided loyalty to two fields and to be uncertain of themselves, like persons of double nationality.

I met Brian at Liverpool and crossed over in a cabin at the expense of his club. I shared it with a second row forward of the Manchester Rugby Football Club.

"Dull country, Ireland," he said; "travel for miles without coming to a town."

"Yes, they're scarce," I replied from my bunk.

"What are?" he said.

"Towns in Ireland."

"Yes, that's what I said."

"Yes, that's what you said. Good-night."

"Good-night."

. . . . .

We awoke after the ship had berthed in Dublin. It was a day of wind, sun, and cloud. I at once got a horse and

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rode out in Phoenix Park. At first I let it gallop and abandoned myself to the thrill of rushing swiftly through the air at one with the animal. At last we stopped. I leant back in the saddle and breathed in great mouthfuls of the soft air. Each breath of the wind blowing off the hills seemed to pour new vitality into me, each expiration to drain the foul vapours of the town from me. Then off we galloped again.

Full of country air, I went to the Abbey Theatre that night and found that Lennox Robinson's play, *The Big House*, was being produced for the first time. The play was about a Southern Irish Protestant gentleman and his family during the previous ten years. There was the usual damp, slowly decaying, large country house. The owner was a typical Irish gentleman, kind, well-meaning but futile, his land or most of it having been sold, living on dividends earned for him by workers in other lands. His wife was English. She had never accustomed herself to the unreality of that life. All her standards were outraged every day. In Ireland all the things that matter in England, such as punctuality, truthfulness, exactitude, tidiness, in short, regularity of thought and action, seemed to mean nothing. The children, however, belonged to the new age. The boy had gone off to the war, as the sons of all these houses went, and like so many had never returned. So the sister expressed his spirit as well as hers. She had been reared in Ireland, she was part of it, come well or ill.

In the three acts allowed to the dramatist, the last phase in the history of the Big House was depicted. We saw the wounded English officer staying in the house during the

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war getting to care for the girl. Later he returns in a raiding party of Black and Tans.

Always the master of the house tries to help. He writes letter after letter to the authorities trying to save some young man on the place who has got mixed up in "the Troubles." Finally he is seen writing another such letter to the new Free State authorities trying to get a reprieve for some young "Irregular," when the Irregulars arrive themselves and burn down the house before his eyes. Then his English wife, who has kept her exasperation to herself for many years, bursts out and says all the things the English usually feel about us, but are too polite to say, and the two of them go off to live in England, probably to settle in Camberley or Farnham amidst retired English civil servants and army officers, where she will find all the things she missed in Ireland, and he will wander miserably about, not comprehending what it is he has lost and cannot find. The daughter remains standing in the door of the summer-house amidst the remnants of the family possessions. Her brother's spirit appears to her, and, speaking for him and their kind, she says she will remain, face out the new Ireland in which she has a part to play, and take her place in its rebirth.

Sitting hunched up at one side of the auditorium I was profoundly moved by the author's theme. As the play proceeded my attention became less and less centred on the actual drama being acted before me, and more and more fixed upon my own life. Need I become a doctor in some English provincial town or go off and attend sick natives as a minor British official? Need I? Had I lost my birthright?

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Next day we spent in the Wicklow mountains. We sat above Luggala looking down on its black water in the circle of wooded and rocky mountains. Then we climbed down to Lough Dan through a green valley, walking by the side of the brown river which joins the lakes. At Lough Dan we lay on the golden strand and basked in the sun, which on this summer day in winter was warm and balmy. The gentle sounds of the lake filled our ears. I dozed and then lay gazing at the blue expanse of water whose surface appeared almost on a level with my eyes. Around, the mountains rose up on all sides. No human habitation could be seen. I felt completely at peace. Behind, somewhere in my mind, the *motif* of the previous night's play lingered, but I did not try to reason or plan then, but just lay and drank in the beauty of the place.

Then we got up and went back, Brian Cullen to his office-stool in Manchester, I to the wards of the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London. On the boat, as I saw the hills of Ireland fading into the sea haze, I once more allowed myself to think—Forest Hill and Dulwich, Croydon and Lewisham. If I could win my way to Harley Street, I could go and look at the lake in Regent's Park when I felt the memory of Lough Dan coming on. I laughed. A person in a bowler hat looked at me in some alarm and moved off.

“No,” I said out loud.

A man stopped, thinking I spoke to him.

“You're Collis,” he said. “I've often seen you play. Come and have a drink.” I did.

. . . . .

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When I got back to London my mind was made up. I realized that I must get right away from all my previous associations and think things out. Remembering my previous American adventure and the freedom of that country, I applied for a Rockefeller Research Fellowship. Meanwhile, as I had a wait of six months before hearing the result, I filled in the time by going back to King's College Hospital as senior casualty officer. The post, though chiefly a surgical one, turned out to be of immense interest. It is difficult to describe a London hospital casualty department, for although the rows of bottles of disinfectants, the table covered with dressings, the polished walls and brilliant lights remain constant, the scenes being enacted change more quickly than on a revolving stage. At one moment broad farce, another stark tragedy, and again comedy. Suddenly the door is flung open and two ambulance men rush in carrying a middle-aged woman, blood spouting from a wound in her neck, through which the air hisses as she has cut her windpipe with a kitchen knife, but failed to divide the important blood-vessels. We sew her up again and send her back to her old life without asking why. We have just finished with her when a pregnant woman comes in, already in labour. The house accoucheur is called and they are closeted in another screen room which cloaks the sights but not the sounds. A slightly drunken motorist is brought in by a policeman who wants to know if he is drunk or not. "Very difficult to say, sergeant. Perhaps under the circumstances, as nobody is hurt, it would be best not to charge him."

The evening wears on, it is Saturday night, the pubs are closing. An elderly lady with a wild look is brought in for



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undressing in Camberwell Green. She is very large and red in the cheeks, and is wearing a bonnet held on with hat-pins. Suddenly she withdraws one of these and sticks it into the policeman's leg.

“The bitch,” he yells, letting go of her.

There she stands, hatpin in hand in the centre of the floor, the policeman cowers against one wall; the accident dresser has disappeared; the nurses have retired behind the swing doors through which they peep. The senior casualty officer is called upon to deal with the situation.

Cuts are sewn up, fractures set, and a thousand minor or major complaints dealt with. At last I go to bed. It seems only a few minutes before I am awakened again.

“The porter in Casualty would like you to go across, sir.”

I put on a dressing-gown. As I approached the casualty room I hear high voices. Something is wrong. The porter comes up.

“It's a fellow called X, sir. He always comes round when his wife locks him out on Saturday night, complaining of something, to get given a bed. I told him to clear off, but he won't go, and what he's saying to the nurses would make you blush, sir.”

“What's wrong?” I said.

“I've been bitten by a dog.”

“Where?”

“On the leg.”

“Which leg?”

“Can't say.”

I looked him up and down. He was very large, he had huge hairy arms. My predecessor had been a little feller.

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I looked at the porter. I thought we could manage him between us.

"If you don't know what's wrong with you, why come here?"

"If I can't come to King's College 'Ospital, where can I go?"

I told him. The porter and I seized him simultaneously by the back of his neck and the seat of his trousers, jerked him to his feet, rushed him out of the room and with a swing flung him down the three stone steps into the street. He never came back.

The job was so strenuous that I had time neither to read nor think. Six months passed with great speed. In June I heard I had been appointed a Rockefeller Fellow and should sail for America in September, and at once I resigned from King's joyfully and left south-east London for ever.

## ***PART FIVE***





## CHAPTER XIV

### *A Voyage*

PARTLY FOR THE ADVENTURE and partly to save money I obtained a passage toward the end of September on the s.s. *Severnbridge*, which was sailing with a consignment of china clay from Fowey in Cornwall to Philadelphia. One still autumn day I found myself standing on the quay of the Cornish town. Slowly round the bend of the river the *Severnbridge* appeared. She was long, low, unbuoyant with her solid cargo, and covered all over in white china clay dust from the top of her funnel to water-level. At once I boarded a motor boat which rapidly took me alongside. Catching a swinging rope-ladder, I climbed aboard, mounted to the bridge, and stood waving to those on shore as we passed

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slowly between the old castles on each side of the harbour entrance, and so out to sea.

Once outside, we set our course to the sou'west and steamed steadily away at some eight to ten knots. After a time I went below and was introduced by the Captain to the first and second officers and chief engineer. I can now only remember that the former two appeared reasonably efficient officers and that the last came from Scotland. What they looked like and what they said has completely disappeared from my memory, leaving no visual image or auditory recollection.

The Captain was different, however, and I was later to realize that he possessed one of the completest personalities I had ever met. I had been told he was a north-country man who did not have much to say, but that there was "no nonsense about him." Usually the latter phrase is used to describe a certain low-brow type of person who has either been born incapable of original thought or has reached that stage by long sojourn in some suburbia. The Captain was not of this class. I don't know what he'd have appeared like in some little house with his wife and family at North Shields when on shore in an off spell, but here on his ship he was master in all senses. First there was complete understanding of the intricacies of navigation and intimate personal knowledge of the workings of every department in the ship. Then there was leadership: he knew he was master; he knew he could put any man who disobeyed him at sea in irons; he knew what orders to give and he knew that his orders would be carried out. Finally there was determination; difficulties and dangers which might arise would

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make no difference. He would be careful—careful of his men's lives, careful of the company's pocket—but if it came to tight corners he would be capable of daring orders. If the fates decreed it, and disaster came in spite of him, he would go down without emotion standing on the bridge of his ship.

He was short, thick-set, had blue eyes and a north-country accent. He was neither garrulous nor silent. As he knew nothing about medicine or science, and I nothing about navigation or ships, our conversation on the voyage was limited and we were often silent, though contentedly so. Small talk to a specialist about his work by an outsider is only forgiven by the expert if the chatterer is a pretty girl. When we did talk it was usually of minor things. Occasionally he spoke of the sea, particularly the North Atlantic, which he appeared to regard as a sort of adversary; sometimes of his family. Once he showed me a photograph of his small daughter, a pretty little girl in a muslin frock. Without a home and wife and child he would have been incomplete in some way, I knew. They were necessary to him, but they didn't make him live. But on his ship he touched immortality. He seemed to me to represent in his person the present and historical greatness of England more than any other man of his race I had met before.

For six days we steamed on our course without incident. I got to know some of the crew who came to me with various ailments. The sailors had sore hands; the stokers suffered from constipation; the Captain's steward had a weakness in the stomach.

The men before the mast were of numerous nationalities

## THE SILVER FLEECE

—Englishmen, Swedes, a Dane, a red-headed boy from Skye, two Irishmen, a couple of Latins, and so on. The stokers were the happiest of them all, due to the amount they sweated at each watch. They became positively hilarious when my remedies began to work, holding community singings on deck in their time off.

But in spite of having established these friendly terms with everybody, life began to get dull. Day followed day. We steamed steadily through a calm sea under a grey sky. We entered the Gulf Stream and the air became hot and moist. There was nothing for me to do. It is impossible to read or think coherently on a tramp in a swell.

After dinner about the sixth day I strolled into the chart-room. The ship was rolling a lot in a heavy swell. It was sticky hot. The first officer was looking at the barometer.

"Seems to have dropped a degree in the last hour," he said; "we'll be getting some dirty weather."

During the next watch the glass continued to fall as if there was a leak in the mercury. I went up on the bridge. Visibility was very bad, a grey mist hung over the sea in which large bunches of floating yellow seaweed could not be seen. The swell seemed to be growing worse every minute. A wave broke over the forecastle and with a crash came aft over the holds. There was no wind. Quite suddenly there was a puff of moist air, again stillness, then another, and another; then it began to blow steadily; rapidly the violence of the wind increased, singing through the rigging, capping white the tops of the waves.

The Captain came up and remained standing silently by the helmsman. The wind was blowing up directly on our



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port beam, so that we wallowed broadside on in a rising sea.

"Turn her off four points a-starboard."

Her nose gradually came round and faced nor'-nor'-west with the gale following us. For two hours we ran thus before it, while the seas grew in height and volume and the wind increased in force.

It is difficult to describe the appearance of the North Atlantic as seen in a gale from a tramp. The waves are about the height and thickness of the largest sandhills, reaching fifty to seventy feet from the bottom of the trough to breaking crest. They are of such width that the ship rides up one side and down the other. If the ship is running before, as we were at this moment, these great waves mount up behind her stern and threaten to crash over her afterdecks.

In a sailing boat, being pooped (as this is called) is one of the most dangerous things that may happen. In a steel steamship, though the ship will not be swamped, the steering gear may be damaged or the rudder carried away. If this happens the ship is almost unmanageable—it wallows about between the waves and is pounded by violent seas till something gives way and she fills up and sinks. If, on the other hand, she steams into the gale at any speed, she may fail to ride over the larger seas, which will then crash over her forrard decks, carrying away gear and boats and possibly tearing away the hatch coverings from one of the forrard holds. To avoid this the usual custom is the heave-to, which means that the ship is put into the wind, or rather kept two points off it, while the engines are slowed down to half speed, or that which will just keep her moving forward

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through the water. This manœuvre allows most ships to ride out almost any storm, though there are dangers even now. If the cargo be of grain or anything which may "shift," she may lose her normal centre of gravity and turn turtle.

Every year quite a number of ships are lost with all aboard in these ways. For a day or so the papers are full of the news that s.s. *So-and-So* has sent out an S.O.S. to the effect that her steering gear is damaged, that water is gaining in the forrard hold. Later we read, when the *Berengaria* or other great liner arrived at the bearings given by the distressed ship, nothing was found.

"Poor fellows," we say, and go on with our bacon and eggs, while we prop the paper between the teapot and our plate, scanning it for news of a more interesting or personal nature.

The fate of these ships depends chiefly on the judgment of their skippers. The latter have to decide between the interests of their employers, particularly in regard to time wasted when hove-to, and the possibility of getting the ship smashed up by proceeding.

I went down to the wireless operator's room behind the chart-room. News had come in that the wind had reached eighty miles an hour in places. The following seas appeared very terrifying now, if we looked astern, piling up and towering behind the poop. When it became difficult to steer, the Captain decided to heave-to. This meant going about completely in the now raging gale. We all went into the chart-room. I stood a little apart from the others, all of whom had something to do. Very slowly she came round. For a moment she was broadside on, a mountainous sea

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towered above us and appeared to be about to fall upon our decks, but we lurched some way up its side and only its breaking mane splashed across us, hitting the chart-room windows with a thud like the slap of an open palm. She came round farther. Having reached the required position, the engines were slowed. We remained hove-to for the rest of that day, all that night, and all next day.

The motion of being hove-to has to be experienced to be appreciated at all. The vessel rises perpendicularly up the near sides of the huge waves, descends no less perpendicularly down the far sides, wallows in the trough, and rolls from side to side. It is impossible to rest, for unless you maintain a firm grip on some fixed object you are thrown over and rolled about the cabin before you are able to steady yourself again. After thirty-six hours of this, a very sorry group of individuals sat down to tea in the ship's mess. We all felt sore and bruised, sick and tired. Our tongues were like blotting paper. We looked at the salt butter, the stale bread, and the plum-and-apple with unutterable loathing. The door swung open and the steward came in closely followed by the end of a wave.

"'Ere you are, sir—'ave a kipper."

"Look here, this is the third time you've given us kippers in succession. What's the joke?"

"Ain't no joke, sir. It's like this 'ere. Can't cook nothin' but kippers in this 'ere gale. Everything else falls off the fire and gets spoilt."

"They certainly do look as if you'd walked on them once or twice. Throw them overboard."

The Captain said:

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"Ba gum, Chief, I have had about enough of this. We'll put her into it again if you're ready."

"Aye, aye, sir."

It was dark now when I went up on the bridge. The telegraph went full speed ahead. We began to move forward again into the storm. The wind was dropping, but the seas seemed higher than ever. Often the whole forrard portion of the ship was submerged. Sometimes it seemed impossible that it would ever come up again. I was standing at one side of the bridge, dressed in oilskins, sea-boots, and sou'wester. The water ran off me in streams. It seemed quite hot; the wind was warm.

Suddenly a bigger sea than usual towered up ahead. We rose up its near side, balanced on top, swung down the far side into the valley beyond. Now I saw dimly another, even larger, wave following the last. We started to rise to it but it seemed to swell out, our nose went under, deeper, deeper. The minute before I was forty feet above the sea, now I was waist deep in foam and water. I clung to the rail, I heard the wave strike the hot funnel behind with a hiss. "This is the end," I thought; "we're sinking." I felt no fear, rather exhilaration. If the ship sank, it sank; the thought did not frighten me.

Then slowly the ship came up out of the depths, shaking herself free of the phosphorescent water which clung glistening to the masts and rigging.

I went down again to the wireless room. The operator said: "There's a ship about two hundred miles astern with a sick man aboard. Its skipper is giving the symptoms and asking any doctor who gets the message to give directions."

## A VOYAGE

I got the symptoms and started to direct the Captain to keep the patient quiet—a little difficult in the circumstances, I admitted to myself—and on no account to give him an aperient. Before I had finished another doctor from some other ship, or somewhere in Europe or America, started to tell the Captain to give him a dose of castor oil. Then our wireless got jammed with diverse medical directions from all sides.

"Well, good luck to 'im," said the operator, "but I hate to think what he'll suffer when the Captain begins to follow out his medical instructions!

"There's a German ship somewhere near coming in the opposite direction on our course. I was trying to locate her when you came in. I think I'll have another shot. It would be a pity if we collided on a night like this."

"Not very likely," I said, "the Atlantic's pretty large."

He started to try to pick up the German ship again, but all he could get was a baseball game which was being broadcast from Detroit. Each time he tried to get on, Babe Ruth hit a home run and the cheering blocked that wave length for three thousand miles around. Sitting there in that little cabin with the storm howling outside and more than a thousand miles of sea in every direction, the whole thing seemed crazy. It didn't seem right for Babe Ruth to be getting mixed up in a storm in mid-Atlantic while playing baseball in Detroit. This sort of thing ought to be thought out, I felt; but I didn't feel capable of thought in that stuffy room, so I went back to my place on the bridge. The wind had dropped somewhat; the seas were less frightful; it was raining. It was only just possible to make out the bow of

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the ship through the driving rain. Beyond was absolute blackness.

Suddenly I saw a star moving rapidly towards us. I blinked at it.

"Stars don't move; besides, we're in a mist and there aren't any stars; I must be getting light-headed," I thought. The star came on; then other lights appeared; the dark bulk of a ship between the lights could be made out; it rushed by, and disappeared into the night again. We had passed the German ship.

Now I stood long looking out into the blackness. We were rolling and pitching. The rain and the spray were wet on my face. I was used to the motion; the water refreshed me; my senses grew keen; my brain felt keyed up. Gradually I reached a higher consciousness. I seemed to be outside my body and able to see myself standing on the bridge, as if from somewhere behind. I seemed to understand the meaning of the sea and man's struggle with it. I felt a sort of kinship with hundreds of others who had set out across this same sea with their hopes on the New World. The Old World had bound them, held them down, had enslaved them with its beliefs and regulations; they looked to America for freedom.

## *PART SIX*







## CHAPTER XV

### *America Revisited*

*American Muse, whose strong and diverse heart  
So many men have tried to understand,  
But only made it smaller with their art,  
Because you are as various as your land.*

—Stephen Vincent Benét

THE WIND WAS BLOWING from the west. As yet we could see no land, but we could sense it. The evening sun falling slantwise on the water gave its ruffled surface the appearance of molten metal. The pilot came aboard. He held a cigar in the corner of his mouth; he spoke with a Yankee

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drawl. Slowly we entered the estuary of the Delaware and passed up the river towards Philadelphia. When we arrived at the custom house it was 10 p.m. and dark. Lines of ships had arrived before us. The river was not very wide and only faintly illuminated by the shore flares and ships' lights. I marvelled as our pilot backed the *Severnbridge* into the line of anchored vessels as if parking a car in a crowded street.

The next day started early. The port doctor was aboard by 6 a.m. The Captain had taken out a flagon of rum; first the customs officials, then the prohibition agents, who came aboard to search us for liquor, had their little tot to help them on with their jobs. Our north-country skipper said he knew the exact amount necessary to oil the springs. He always provided that amount and no more. He didn't hold with smuggling, he said; he never brought in bottles for the consuls—it didn't pay. Never waste anything, least of all words, was one of his guiding rules. We were the last ship in the night before, but the first away in the morning. We went on upstream to our berth, running alongside a wharf behind which stood a huge warehouse. It was not yet 7.30 a.m., but as we approached the shore I noticed a crowd of stevedores, black and white, standing waiting for us to berth, and before we were made fast they were aboard, had the hatches off, the derricks unlashd, and in less than thirty seconds after coming alongside they were unloading the china clay.

When I stepped ashore the sun was shining keenly. The air had an electric intensity. I was in America once more.

During the next two years I lived more vividly than ever

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before or since. I broke the bonds which bound my mind; I experienced the greatest joys the world can give. I suffered too, and felt loneliness. But now that I come to tell of it and of America, I find the scenes too many and too recent in my mind. Each flashes up before me. The horses: the horse with the wicked eye that made the girl cry and lead it home. When I mounted, it stood straight up on its hind legs, but when I brought my crop down between its ears, it righted itself, looked round at me with one blood-shot eye and then trotted off as good as gold.—The mad horse that always bolted when any one got on it. How I rode it wildly over timber fences, then out across open spaces full of tall yellow waving grass. How it galloped into a wood and nearly killed me. How it broke its leg at last.—The queer dun horse that had a run like a crab, and the four-year-old I found and rode in the Green Spring Valley Drag, which turned out to be a sort of steeplechase over the five-foot post and rail fences of the Green Spring Valley Course, and how the unclipped animal finished in a lather, but intact, having jumped over my host, who had fallen and broken a convenient hole in the last fence.

Then those early morning paper-chases, when we rose and dressed in the dark, set out for the rendezvous, picking up a cup of stinging hot strong coffee and a doughnut at some workmen's bar on the way, to arrive and mount our horses as the dawn broke and the blood-red sun, seen through the branches of the trees, looked like a lantern hanging at heaven's gate.

Two of the party would set out with bags of paper, their horses' hooves clanging metallically on the frozen ground.

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. . . Five minutes—then after them at full gallop we would go, down the rides, through the woods, halloaing as we rode. Then out into the open spaces speeding across the fields, acting as hounds and huntsmen at once. Branches would sweep us from our saddles, horses would come down. On we would go, through rivers, up and down banks, finally catching sight of the quarry and galloping frantically after them till they escaped or were rounded up.

The gay Southerners—in their open colonial houses in the Green Spring Valley, with their inconsequence, their unreality, their generosity, and their amazing friendliness—in the midst of whom a new rich millionaire had built a castellated structure where some thirty of us used to go on Sunday nights. We would enter the vast baronial hall, the floor of which was covered with lion skins; a huge black butler would come and supply us with cocktails and caviare. A magnificent dinner would be forthcoming, but who our host was we were never quite sure, not liking to ask.

As I write I see again:—my old Ford, that I bought for fifty dollars, that had three cylinders, or at least three that worked, one of whose front wheels once came off and went on by itself down a hill, nearly wrecking two cars which tried to avoid it. How its engine froze up and seized up, how it was buried in a snow-drift and eventually sold for twenty-five dollars, still moving on.—The Rockefeller Foundation, on the twenty-fourth storey of a vast building in upper Manhattan Island, whose sole object was the distribution of vast sums of money for the betterment of mankind, regardless of race or religion.—Wall Street, full of

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hurrying men with pale faces, and a biting wind.—The frozen russet woods of New England, interwoven with the russet frock of a girl. A kiss by a wood fire when the snow was falling softly.—*Porgy*, acted by the negroes themselves. One of the most moving dramatic productions I have ever seen, containing all the beauty and all the tragedy of that coloured world.

These are some of the memories which crowd into my mind and confuse my brain. But all are but a background to the memory of one man, Ned Park, and that which happened to me in his unit at the Johns Hopkins Hospital.

. . . . .

On arrival at the Johns Hopkins I asked a fine-looking woman, the lady hostess, who sat beneath a vast marble statue of Christ, where I should find Dr. Park. She directed me to the Pædiatric Department, which I reached after a walk through long corridors. I entered the office and again inquired where I would find the Professor, this time from a most attractive little girl in a white coat, who was sitting writing on a typewriter with incredible speed while a strange-looking person with a baggy face and an eye-glass dictated to her. She stopped and with a dazzling smile led me through an inner door into a study. Here a tall, ungainly man, with a queer shy smile, rose and stretched out an enormous hand with which he enveloped mine. He spoke with a certain slowness and unusual choice of phrase. After some time he handed me over to the monocled person, who had followed me in and whom he introduced as

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an associate professor. The latter led me out and said he would show me over the hospital. As we went along he talked about "the old folks at home" and the Prince of Wales. I realized at once that he was suffering from the peculiar American disease Anglo-mania. It and Anglo-phobia are common in the United States. Both are very trying. The former believe everything English God-sent, the latter the reverse. The associate professor was a bad case, though as far as was known he had never been in England, yet he regarded himself as "one of us" and not a Yankee. I pointed out that I couldn't claim the privilege of being English myself, but my association with Cambridge was apparently enough. His imitation in dress went no further than the eye-glass, probably due to the fact that it is impossible to get an American tailor to cut a pair of trousers with a high stomach. He introduced me to everybody we met. When we came into a room everybody ceased what they were doing, came up and shook hands. I was slightly embarrassed by the cordiality of their welcome, being used to the English way of receiving visitors. In similar circumstances in England, everybody would have turned their backs and gone on with whatever they were doing.

The Johns Hopkins is one of the most curious buildings in America. Some of the blocks are quite ancient, others are new. In the centre are some old red brick structures with slanting slate roofs, two storeys high. Behind them rises the new surgical wing, about fifteen storeys; across the courtyard opposite are the Children's and Psychiatric Departments, each a mild five storeys.

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The new Wilmer Eye Institute was going up at that time. I never saw how high it got.

Somewhere in the middle of the hospital McCallum's pathological unit was housed, containing the auditorium where McCallum held his famous demonstrations. Here the great physicians would read out their diagnosis and treatment of the late patient. McCallum would then dramatically produce the liver, kidneys, brain, whatever it was, from under a cloth, sometimes dumbfounding the clinicians with altogether unexpected findings. These demonstrations were most highly interesting and instructive and were attended by nearly the whole staff of the Hospital.

Across the road was an immense thin rectangular building of indefinite height, the School of Hygiene, on the seventh floor of which McCollum, the dietitian and vitamin man, lived amidst hundreds of hungry rats. He differed in almost every possible way from the sparkling and witty McCallum. He was slow of speech. He had only one old brown suit apparently, very baggy at the knees and loose in the pockets; his waistcoat was always buttoned up wrong.

Both McCallum and McCollum were enormously famous all over the world, but they weren't friends for all that. And nothing would annoy McCallum so much as when some invitation to a party went wrong and was delivered to McCollum, particularly as the latter always seized the unusual chance and accepted at once.

When I had been shown over the place I felt I had done one day's work anyway and was quite glad to escape into the open air for, in spite of the fact that it was about 70° F. outside, the central heating was in full blast inside and the

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heat unbearable to one unused to it. My one really unpleasant memory of America is the central heating. The custom in the children's out-patient department was to work from 1.30 p.m. to 5.30 p.m. During this time all the windows were kept shut and the radiators full on, till the temperature reached 80° F. and the atmosphere stank of unwashed negro children.

. . . . .

It took me some time to get used to the Hopkins' point of view. In London the Harley Street specialist is a sort of god. Numbers of brilliant young men are forced to pay fabulous rents (£200 to £300 a year) for a room in Harley Street, to wear black suits and hard hats, procure (on tick from the bank if no other way) expensive cars, so as to be part of the game, while they actually live in some little flat in Hampstead or Battersea. They may have already proved themselves first-class physicians or surgeons, but unless they conform to the Harley Street rules the great English public will have nothing to do with them.

At the Hopkins the exact reverse held good. The oldest clothes were worn, some did not shave or wash much, nobody cared what you looked like. Your position depended on your publications and your reputation as an investigator. In London the pure investigator was despised as a mere laboratory worker. At the Hopkins the pure clinician was despised as a mere practitioner. If the London system at its best produces physicians and surgeons second to none in the world, private practice teaching responsibility



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to the patient that the salaried doctor never knows, it also leads to much sham and quackery. The American system of whole-time salaried hospital doctors has no place for quacks and "in my opinion" men, but it produces an orgy of research. The greatest advances in medicine recently have undeniably come from America, but for every one important contribution to advancing science, a thousand valueless articles are published.

Of all American schools the Hopkins emphasizes this point of view most. Almost the first thing I was asked was what problem I was going to investigate.

"There are plenty of rabbits upstairs, why not start on them?" some one said.

"Yes, but what do you expect me to do with them?"

"There are lots of problems and rabbits are cheap."

I felt rather shocked, but made no reply as I realized I was out of my depth.

In our department the day was divided more or less into halves, during one of which research was done, in the other teaching and clinical work. At certain hours every one met and discussed some problem together. At these times any one could speak, from the most junior intern to the professor, the only unwritten law being that he must have something intelligent to add to the discussion, for no quarter was given to fools. Intellectual honesty was the greatest characteristic of the place, though it must be admitted that advancement of medical knowledge was put often before the actual healing of the individual patient.

It seemed to me that the American system in practice worked out about half way between the English and Ger-

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man. I once took an American professor on a ward round with a famous English children's physician of the old school. As we passed round, our discussion upon the subject of scurvy and the problem of the spread of infection from bed to bed was somewhat strained. The young American did not like pushing his knowledge forward and "the old man" was inclined to pooh-pooh modern scientific ideas.

"What did you think of that?" I said afterwards.

"Well," replied the American, "it was interesting to see the famous old man but . . . though mind you I'd sooner have him than a lot of others looking after my own child. Recently I was in a certain famous German clinic. There, when the professor entered the ward all the children burst out crying, here they all sit up and call out his name till the sister quietens them."

Park had come to take over the Children's Department only a few days before my arrival. Hence, I came at a moment when a new era was commencing. A few of the old *régime* had been left—the associate professor already described, Emmet Holt, son of the great Holt, and Hugh Josephs, the tiniest little man, who worked all day by himself in his laboratory, making important discoveries.

Among the new arrivals two stood out from the rest, Count Bengt Hamilton and Rustin McIntosh. Some Scottish Hamilton ancestor had gone over to sell his sword to Gustavus Adolphus, had fought well, been rewarded, and had founded the Swedish Hamilton family. Bengt Hamilton, who had come to America some years before on a research fellowship, had distinguished himself at Harvard

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and had stayed on, taking out his American papers. Neither in his appearance nor in his manner was there anything of his lone Scottish ancestor. He had a hawk-like face, a somewhat fragile body, and a mind inflexibly fixed on the problems of science. He now holds a chair of research in Chicago.

McIntosh was so good at everything that we were all a little jealous. He was a first-class clinician, mathematician, musician and athlete. Not only was he endowed with the best possible brain and body, but he also possessed wisdom and understanding; his only fault was that he had no faults. He is now the professor of pædiatrics at Columbia University in New York.

All were whole-time workers, none did private practice. Over their appointments and salaries the Professor had absolute power. On him the department pivoted, everything ultimately depending upon his power of inspiration and organization.

Park's method of organizing and leading his department was unique among professors. Although he had more to do than any one else, he would always volunteer to do their work if they wanted to get off. Although he possessed vast knowledge he never put himself forward. He was generous, his kindness taking the form of little thoughtful acts of help or encouragement. He was magnificently absent-minded about things outside, though he never forgot anything in connection with the major problems of the day. Miss Richards, his dazzling secretary, carried on a correspondence with Mrs. Park by means of notes conveyed in his pockets unknown to him. Even so, he more than once

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asked five or six people to dinner and forgot to tell his wife.

Soon we gave him our complete devotion. We called him "The Chief"; we would have followed him anywhere. Gradually a sort of routine became established. During the week the department worked at high pressure from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., including Saturday afternoons, in off moments discussing scientific problems. Sunday, however, was set aside for regaining our equilibrium. Early we collected at La Paix, the Parks' home, where we played ice hockey on the pond, or baseball, till everybody had arrived. Then usually the morning would be given up to a wild ride out by Loch Raven five miles away. While on these rides the weariness and staleness of the indoor week would leave us and we would thrill with the joy of physical well-being.

The riders and non-riders would all meet for a picnic lunch somewhere by the lakeside. Here a big wood fire would be lighted, and lumps of beef-steak and a great bowl of potatoes cooked and coffee made. After this meal we would go for a long walk round the lake, or over the rolling Maryland country, arriving at the Park home as it was getting dark. On Sunday the servants had the day off, so we would now invade the kitchen and there cook ourselves supper, everybody helping. Then with muscles exercised, bodies full of air and sunshine and just the right amount of food, we would go into the sitting-room, where a huge wood fire would be burning. There was often no light save that from the fire, which shone on the faces around, ennobling each countenance as its rays carried their wordless song into the world. Then McIntosh would sit

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down at the piano and begin to play; he needed no light or music to guide him. On, on he would play, perhaps for half an hour without a pause. Schumann's *Carnival* would envelop us, drawing us up out of ourselves while we sat and watched the logs burning.

"How do you remember it all?" I asked the first time I heard him play.

"In my fingers," he replied.

Later we often read each other bits of poems, descriptions of places or battles. They always made me read them "The Goat Paths", by James Stephens. It fitted the mood some-way:

*I would think  
Until I found  
Something  
I can never find,  
Something  
Lying  
On the ground  
In the bottom  
Of my mind.*

Park had a passion for the battles of the American Civil War, and when Benét's "John Brown's Body" appeared would read us the description of Gettysburg, of the South, of Pickett's charge, of Lincoln, the loneliest man the world has ever known.

At first I found it hard to acclimatize myself to this new world. Letters and worries followed me and drew me back towards the life I had left. But the freedom of thought

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enthralled me. After the stagnation of life in south-east London, the readiness to meet new ideas, the unaffected eagerness to feel and live were refreshing, even if the noise, rush and heat sometimes put my nerves on edge. Gradually, however, I became more and more enthralled by the life. I forgot the past, and for a short time succeeded in accomplishing one of the hardest feats, that of becoming part of another people.

. . . . .

My part in the work of the hospital was a very minor one and of little importance. I was engaged upon writing a thesis on allergy for a Cambridge degree and hence spent most of my mornings in the general allergy clinic seeing cases referred from the Pædiatric Department. In the afternoons I worked chiefly in the general out-patient department for sick children. Although my work was not very scientific and I had little responsibility, I learned much about pædiatrics and obtained some understanding of the people of America. For to these departments came all conditions of children. Their parents often spoke with a guttural German accent, in almost unintelligible Polish-English, or plain Italian, but the children looked, dressed and spoke like Americans, for so strong is the Earth Spirit of the New World that it only takes one generation to make an American. Perhaps most interesting of all were the coloured people. They have become American too, but yet have retained the simplicity of their race and with their childish symbols they sometimes express eternal truths more surely than their more intellectual white brothers.

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The sick coloured children were most lovable. They were gay, ready always to stand up in bed and dance; they were always smiling; they chattered to each other in queer sing-song voices about their affairs oblivious of those around. When they died they did so without fuss or trouble. Once I called a little bob-tailed black lady, "Topsy"; she was greatly offended. Perhaps she thought I was being patronizing, perhaps "Uncle Tom's Cabin" has not been forgotten and still irritates the blacks as it does the whites. I never found out, but in future I was always careful to learn their correct names and address them with fitting respect.

The allergy clinic chiefly dealt with hay fever and asthma cases. Here I saw the children weekly for long periods of time getting to know them and their parents, and occasionally visiting them in their homes while investigating their environment. In this way I came to know the Rea family. Father was Italian and played the clarinet in an orchestra down town, mother was French, from Nice where she had been in service, the boy John though he was dark haired, brown eyed and olive skinned, was altogether American. He was, I think, the most attractive child I have ever known, his eyes sparkling with fun and his whole body radiating vitality. Sometimes he would be stricken with most frightful attacks of asthma when he would lie gasping till I came and gave him an injection to relieve the spasm. On working up his case I found him sensitive to certain animal emanations among which were those of rabbits, dogs, and guinea pigs. John had a passion for pet animals and not only kept a number of rabbits and guinea pigs in the Rea home, but also was wont to take in stray

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cats and dogs. Bruno an old buck rabbit and Beppo the guinea pig lived happily together in the large basement room of the house, though they disliked strangers. If I entered Bruno would flatten his ears on his back and regard me malevolently while Beppo retired under the press. It was a terrible day when I proved that John's worst attacks of asthma were caused by emanations from Bruno. The boy was inconsolable. I was adamant; Bruno must go, though I agreed that no summary execution should take place, and John suffered several more attacks before a suitable home was found. On the day of departure he was terribly upset and got a severe attack while kissing him farewell. Signor, Madame and I became quite alarmed at his condition and a hasty council of war was called to discuss the problem of how to find some hairless substitute. Dogs—No; cats—No; a bird of some sort—I thought best not. Well then what? Desperately the conclave sat on while we sought some suitable creature with a horny epidermis and a lovable nature.

"What about a turtle," I said at last rather hopelessly. Madame was doubtful but Signor thought it might do, and as no better suggestion could be made we went and bought a beautiful pigmy water turtle and presented it to John as he came round from his attack. He was slightly consoled. The turtle was interesting though unaffectionate.

Some weeks later I was sitting in my room in the clinic when Signor Rea entered abruptly. His hair was wild, his dress disordered. He appeared in great mental excitement and distress. He was carrying his clarionet case.

"It is the end," he said holding out his arms. "I am



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through. I will never go back. No. All these years we have lived together—yes. To-day the spaghetti was thrown over my head . . . I did not say it. She said I said it . . .” While he spoke he danced up and down. This is terrible, I thought as he continued—the end of the Rea family. After a time he grew a little calmer. In desperation I sought something soothing to say. At last by way of diversion I asked him how John was and if the turtle was being a success.

“Ah Doctor,” he cried, “we can never thank you for what you have done for John, there have been no more attacks of asthma since Bruno left and the little turtle is fine.” He rose, drew himself up to his full height. “Now I go,” he said. He shook my hand and walked out with dignity carrying his clarinet; but whether he intended to set forth as a lonely wandering minstrel or to take his usual place in the orchestra I feared to ask. The door closed. I felt very hot. I got up and opened the window. When I turned round Madame was standing where Signor had just stood. They must have passed each other in the elevators I thought. I opened my mouth but before I could speak Madame had begun to tell me her troubles. When she stopped, I knew all about her home in La Belle France, her social position and that of Signor Rea, spaghetti and its uses, hell and those people who she expected were there, and one person whom she particularly wished to see burning there. Not knowing the Latin temperament I felt now even more certain that this was the end of the Rea family life. However, remembering how successful the subject of the turtle had been in calming the Signor I said, as soon as I could break into her discourse:

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"How is the turtle?"

"Ah, Docteur," she replied at once quietly, "do you consider we might add to it a mate?"

"Why not?" I said, "if you know what a turtle mate looks like." She smiled, a French smile. I laughed. She laughed. She went.

Two days later was John's birthday. I had a long standing invitation to the feast. As I approached their house I wondered what I should find. Perhaps the home would be broken up. I knocked on the door gingerly. It was opened by John who led me straight to his basement room to see the turtles. His mother was cooking and his father hadn't got in yet, he said. He then asked me a number of questions, of a highly technical nature, regarding the propagation of young turtles. I said I thought they laid eggs. We went up to dinner. It was a feast. We ate quantities of special French, Italian and American dishes and drank home brewed wine. All was serenity.

. . . . .

One of my most interesting experiences at this time was being sent by Park to New York to report on the methods employed elsewhere, before he instituted a special clinic for acute rheumatism in children at the Hopkins. I set out one afternoon and travelled up by the B. & O. railway. It was about 5.30 p.m. as we got on the Hudson River Ferry. More than half the office lights in the sky-scrapers on the end of Manhattan had been turned out, leaving the remainder as tiny specks of light in windows six, seven, ten, twelve hundred feet up. The forest of tall rectangular buildings could

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be made out dimly towering above the river wharfs so that the tallest liners looked puny beside them. It looked like a fairy city born in the imagination of some beneficent magician. But as soon as I stepped ashore the illusion vanished as the noise and clamour of the world's youngest giant enveloped and almost overwhelmed me.

For the next few days I went from clinic to clinic, discussing methods and collecting information. Finally I came to the Rockefeller Institute. I was amazed. I had never seen anything like it before. The buildings, the organization, the wards in the hospital, the superb laboratories—all were perfect. Their clean efficiency seemed to symbolize what the world could be like if mankind could take unto itself the good things that science offered and refuse the bad. In no age has the knowledge of good and evil been so essential as it is to-day. In the Rockefeller Institute the scientists are engaged on the fundamental problems of disease, and their work is for the good of man. But I could not help feeling as I met the brilliant international group of scientists which composed its staff, that elsewhere other workers, as brilliant and devoted to the problems of science as they, were working equally hard on the formulæ of poisonous gases and the theories of ballistics.

Here in the Rockefeller Institute I felt for the first time the fascination of scientific research which was to grip me later and make me a humble member of its band of modern pilgrims. We are accustomed to read in the press or in the medical journals, that twenty years ago over a million people a year died of yellow fever in Central America, and that last year only ten died. That such and such a disease can

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now be prevented, or cured, or that the average age of man has increased by so many years. When we pause and analyze what this means we realize the stupendous boons that modern scientific medicine has bestowed upon man. It thrilled me to stand alone for a moment in the Rockefeller Institute, in the centre of this most modern of all cities, and realize that I was actually in one of the workshops where the world was being changed, and amongst men whose discoveries would affect the destinies of infinitely greater numbers of mankind than the decrees of any dictator. I wondered if the men I had just met were conscious of the romance they lived, and what sort of private lives they had, whether they were lovers like other men, had happy homes, or were altogether absorbed in the great problems upon which they set their minds.

Back once more at the Hopkins with my eyes opened to the wonder of modern scientific medicine I was able better to appreciate what was going on around me.

One episode at this same time I remember particularly which seemed to symbolize the interaction of science and medicine and the life of America. One afternoon a curious party turned up at the hospital in a horse-drawn vehicle with big wheels. The man wore a wide brimmed hat and the clothes of a backwoods-man, the woman a straw hat and a battered blouse and skirt in the fashion of the nineties. They were very dirty and covered with dust from days of travelling. They had a child with them. The man stated in a few words that they came from a district in the South "way back in the hills," hundreds of miles off, that their child was very sick, that they had heard that the

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Johns Hopkins was the best hospital in the world and therefore they had brought her to us. On examination the child proved to be a most interesting case, having a large tumour in the abdomen. I went and fetched "The Chief", all the department came. The surgical professor and staff were called in. There was a difference of opinion, the physicians thinking the condition that of a benign cyst, the surgeons that it was a malignant growth. Meanwhile the parents stood by stolidly without a word. We explained that an operation was necessary, that it might cure the child, or that the case might prove hopeless. They said nothing. Next morning the child was taken up to the surgical unit to be "opened up" while the parents waited in a little room below. We all came across to see the operation and find out who was right. When the abdomen was opened a cyst was found and the professor of surgery began to remove it while the physicians rubbed their hands in silent delight. I did not wait to see the rest of the operation but slipped out and ran down to the little room where the man and the woman were waiting and told them the good news—the child would be cured. They nodded to each other, as much as to say "Well I told you so, we were right to come to the Johns Hopkins." They said nothing to me and I, fearing my foreign accent might jar, went away. When the child was well once more they got into their "buggy", whipped up the horse, and drove off "way back into the hills."

. . . . .

For the last four months of my second winter I lived altogether with the Parks, occupying an attic in their house.

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Here I got to know and love the American fall weather better than ever before. Outside my window was a tree in which two grey squirrels lived. I used to lie and watch them at work in the clear morning sunlight. One Sunday morning I was roused by angry squirrel sounds proceeding from the tree. I looked out. It was a warm balmy day. The largest squirrel, whom I took to be the gentleman of the party, was lying sunning himself on a low branch. His mate was going up and down the tree carrying nuts to the nest which was in a hollow place high up. Every time she passed the branch on which her lord lay she swore vehemently at him. Finally she stood on the branch above and began a tirade. He bore it for a few minutes. Then his tail began to twitch. He got up and without a word climbed slowly to the nest, while she followed chattering abuse at him all the way. He disappeared inside for a moment, then reappeared again carrying a large acorn in his front paws. She screamed with fury at this final outrage, but he, with calculated slowness, returned to his branch, where he lay down, ostentatiously consumed the acorn, fluffed out his tail over his back, and firmly closed both eyes, while his lady was left speechless at the brutality of the male.

It was at this time that the early morning paper-chases on horseback were organized. I felt very fit and more free from care than at any period of my life.

Often I used to drive Park to and from hospital in his old Ford which the children had painted a brilliant red one afternoon. On these drives he used to talk about his department, its problems, his feelings about the different people, his family, occasionally about himself.

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Utter, sometimes heart-rending, honesty was this man's most salient characteristic. He was incapable of telling a lie even to make a good story better. He could not abide false sentiment, whether it were flattery, pretentiousness, or clumsy thinking. All forms of organized religion tend to allow a certain amount of untruth; it can be argued by the theologians that this is only superficial, that it is for the sake of the great mass of not very intelligent mankind, and that fundamentally such apparent falsehoods may express eternal truths which the initiate would express otherwise. But Park saw the sham and could look no farther. His was the scientific mind that will accept nothing simply because other people believe it. He was utterly true to himself. He gloried in scientific endeavour, in nature, in music, and in poetry a little. There was a lot of the pioneer in him. Often he would say that he would much rather be an outpost in a wood cabin battling with nature than a professor with a department to control. To him, as to most Americans and other young peoples, animals were part of the wild to be mastered, not tamed. Thus it was right to hack at a wolf's head when he met the animal, man's primeval foe, swimming a Canadian lake which he was crossing in a canoe. This apparent lack of feeling, however, was no evidence of cruelty or callousness, merely the true elemental point of view that is part of nature's first lesson. He was immensely fond of his children; when his son was ill he became very greatly disturbed and almost unable to control his agitation.

His opinions on others were most illuminating, for he had no illusions about their shortcomings, though however

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much he saw their faults he was unable to be rough with them or ruin their careers. Big men were always ready to serve him with unquestioning loyalty; small men, on the other hand, were apt to impose upon him, and let him down.

So as to obtain enough exercise he often rode the four miles to the hospital on a bicycle. Not only are bicycles seldom ridden except by small boys in the States, but Park himself cut a very strange figure pedalling along with his socks pulled over his trousers and an absent-minded expression of countenance. The small boys of the town often ran after him calling him funny names. One morning a little imp yelled after him:

"Look, there goes Abraham Lincoln on a push bicycle."

It was strangely apt. He was the very reincarnation of a Lincoln, in body huge, rather clumsy, in spirit simple and true.

How the American Civil War had caught his imagination I have already told. This interest might have seemed strange elsewhere, but here in Maryland there was a special nearness to that conflict out of which the modern United States was born. For it was here that the great battles of that war were fought, perhaps the last really gallant battles of the world. To stand on Little Round Top at Gettysburg, just over the border in Pennsylvania, and imagine oneself part of its garrison, desperately holding it against assault after assault, or to walk farther along the ridge and look down the two-mile slope up which Pickett came with fifteen thousand men, the chivalry of the South, to break the Northern line and die, and to know that every yard of the



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ground before you was once soaked in their blood, is to catch a glimpse of the ancient ecstasy of battle which gas and high explosives have destroyed. In thinking of that war our sympathies nearly always go out to the gay gentlemen of the South, partly because of the romance that hangs about their charming homes, partly because they fought so well and lost. But looking at Park and remembering Lincoln, one understood why the North had won—a steadfast purpose so simply right that neither gallantry nor courage could prevail against it.

These days with Park taught me the meaning of that rare attribute, mental honesty. Most of mankind go through their lives without genuinely facing a single major issue; each day slips by in little evasivenesses, or is so filled up with petty actions that the majestic approach of death himself is intentionally obscured till he is upon them—they writhe for a moment and are gone. Here for the first time I met a man who had so trained himself only to accept the true in all things that he could look out upon life with steadfast eyes.

But all too soon it came to a sudden end and I found myself once more straining back towards Europe. In 1928 American prosperity was at its height, money seemed of no account, fortunes could be won in a day. Huge foundations had been set up with the purpose of distributing these vast sums that no one man or one family could spend in a hundred years. So I, like all foreigners, thought of the possibility of diverting a little of this golden stream for the benefit of my own country. George Russell, or A.E. as he is better known in the world of letters, was lecturing in

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America just then. For some reason he was picked upon, much against his will, to be the figurehead around which the little conspiracy was built. None of us, he least of all, knew the quite hopeless difficulties that lay across the path of success; so we went ahead with blithe spirits. As A.E. was returning to Ireland shortly, it was thought best that I should accompany him and help him with the medical details of the plan.

Before I realized it the last night in Baltimore had come. They gave me a party to which everybody came. Punk, Moo, Rollo, and Sally (the Park family), Bengt Hamilton, Rusty McIntosh, the imp-like person small Jane, Fliss, Hugh Josephs and his wife, Dr. McCarthy, Kaji the Hungarian, Reggie Waterfield of Guy's, Tom Hower the handsome Englishman, and Dot. They each wrote me a limerick. I've never hated Time so much as I did that night; each minute brought the parting nearer. Jane went first. The last and saddest adieu had been made. I reached La Paix alone. It was after midnight, the moon was shining on a frozen thaw, the tree trunks, the branches big and small, the grass, the bushes, everything was covered with a thin layer of ice. I walked out across the lawn towards the pond through a fairy world. The moonbeams were caught and thrown back from each icy twig or blade of grass, making a myriad points of silver light, not dazzling enough to shock the eye, but with a tiny brilliance, as if from some other finer world than ours. Such beauty, pressing so close upon the pain in my heart, was unbearable. I turned and walked towards the house. As I reached the steps I paused and looked back at the moonlit scene through the shimmering branches of the

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trees that stood around the house, "Drenched in moon-silver like a fleece." For a moment consciousness widened and I knew what I had found and what yet I sought.

. . . . .

Early next morning "The Chief" drove me to the station and my last memory of Maryland is of his tall, ungainly, beloved figure as I looked back from the train.

## CHAPTER XVI

### "A.E."

WHEN I REACHED the deck of the *Samaria* I found A.E. attempting to disengage himself from a crowd of reporters who clustered around. When he saw me he broke away and came towards me, but was intercepted by an extraordinarily pretty girl.

"Say, Mr. Russell, I represent *The World*. Can you give me a message?" Anybody, the Grand Moderator himself, would have given that girl a message—A.E. did.

We slipped out into the Hudson River, and I, feeling like an American tourist, took a photograph of A.E. silhouetted against the New York skyline. It came out very well later. A.E. is seen leaning on the ship's rail brooding, his face and beard in silhouette.

There were very few people on board, so I had A.E. much to myself. We dined together at a small table; we sat together on the promenade deck or walked up and down. We even played deck tennis. It was a sight for the immortals to see A.E. trying to outwit me by particularly

This chapter was written before A.E.'s death. It has not subsequently been added to or altered, except that some verbs have been changed to the past tense.

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cunning twists, while the ship rolled and his beard got in the way.

At first we talked about America. I listened fascinated while A.E. spoke of the impression this short visit had created in his mind. He had travelled up and down the East Coast from Boston to the far South, and out to the great Western cities and Chicago. Everywhere he had been received as a prince and entertained royally. He had been rushed from place to place, from lecture to lecture. He had travelled thousands of miles across the vast continent in Pullman cars, had been driven through roaring cities in luxurious automobiles of enormous horse-power, had been shot up in express lifts to the sixtieth storey and shot down again. He had seen American hustle, vigour, violence, crudeness, and youth.

Most of Europe's great men having had this experience have gone away and written a book of violent hatred of everything American; a caricature of bootleggers, speak-easies, gangsters, hard-boiled get-rich-quick crooks, loud-voiced boasters, crooning negroes; have presented, in fact, a picture of uncivilized savagery. So consistent were these sketches a few years ago that the ordinary cultured European hates the very idea of visiting America, and regards the average American as a crude uncultured brute. Admittedly the Americans do not help to dispel this erroneous picture by exhibiting all over the world such frightful movies as “The Chain Gang” and the like.

But A.E.'s impressions were quite different. The noise and the rush had not blinded his finer perceptions, for he possessed that rare attribute of the spiritually exalted of

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being capable of retiring into himself and meditating even in the midst of a howling mob. He had pushed aside all the external coverings of American life, and had searched beneath for the real Earth Spirit of the New World. The architecture of New York, Chicago, and other great cities symbolized to him the elemental force of the world's newest race in the physical creative stage, but holding the promise of a mental harvest no less magnificent for to-morrow.

Americans seemed to him most lovable in their almost childish delight when praised, their somewhat haughty defiance if criticized, their naïve pleasure on their work being admired, and, above all, their lavish hospitality and true friendliness. Young, of course they were young and uncertain of themselves, but amazingly competent in their affairs.

Here he saw no extension of European culture, but the birth of a new era. He felt that out of this new race may come the next great world truth, planetary consciousness, universal brotherhood of man, call it what you will. This conception of man's rightful relationship with his fellows of other lands, races, religions, and colours is unlikely to come through the imperial idea. It will not come through German, Anglo-Saxon, or Latin culture conquering the world and forcing all mankind to think through the medium of its thought-idioms. It will only come when each culture learns to respect the others. In the old days each family warred with every other family; then families learned to leave each other alone and to work together; then came the clans, each clan fighting for supremacy; then

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the nations. Not till the nations cease to struggle for supremacy and learn to live at peace with one another, each developing their own culture and respecting their neighbours', can world-consciousness take its place.

To A.E. imperialism and petty nationalism were both abhorrent. Above all he hated what he called the “boy scout” mentality, the modern tendency to march about in mobs, wearing coloured shirts, shouting, and beating up anybody who doesn't shout with you.

In America he thought he had caught a glimpse of this coming salvation of mankind. He had seen great foundations set up for the purpose of helping culture, fighting disease, and aiding knowledge, not only in America or in places where American influence might be of value to herself, but world wide, donations not wrapped in any national flag but utterly free. It is not possible to imagine England presenting France with a million pounds to aid French archæology, less still France handing England such a sum to endow the British Museum, or Germany giving the Finns a brand new public health institute just for the sake of their beautiful eyes. No, such gifts, if they were made by these great European powers, which is unlikely enough, would be part of some diplomatic arrangement with other intent than world brotherhood.

But these are the very things that American corporations have done. The Rockefeller Foundation has given to Cambridge nearly a million pounds for her library, and to University College, London, a larger sum for her medical school, without condition and without show. It has made similar gifts to France, Germany, Belgium, Ireland, Japan,

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Central Europe, indeed to most countries in the world. It has fought disease from the Gold Coast to Havana, and men of all nations, from Adrian Stokes of Ireland to Noguchi of Japan, while working for it have fallen fighting to free the world from plagues.

"I imagine," said A.E., "centuries in which the higher minds in the States will envelop a noble sense of world duty. A world consciousness will struggle with mass mentality and gradually pervade it, to establish there, and in the world perhaps, the idea that all humanity are children of one King, or at least to make so noble an idea part of the heritage of those who come after, until finally, as it must in the ages, it becomes the dominant idea in world consciousness."

We left America behind and steamed north-east. Now A.E. began to talk more intimately about his dreams and visions and about Ireland. Ireland he loved with a passion exceeding utterly what we call patriotism. He loved her as only those who have known her intimately can understand. For Ireland casts upon all those who surrender themselves to her a spell that transcends race and religion and becomes a passion too deep for words.

*For here the ancient mother lingers  
To dip her hand in the diamond dew,  
And lave thine ache with cloud-cool fingers  
Till sorrow die from you.*

But to A.E. Ireland was more than to the rest of us, for in her bosom he had found mystical experiences of surpassing beauty and seen the meaning of the ages:



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*So love, a burning multitude, a seraph wind that blows  
From out the deep of being to the deep of being goes.  
And sun and moon and starry fires and earth and air and  
sea  
Are creatures from the deep let loose, who pause in ecstasy,  
Or wing their wild and heavenly way until again they find  
The ancient deep, and fade therein, enraptured, bright, and  
blind.*

The visions that he has seen and the great mystery that he has approached he has told in a hundred poems of great beauty. But even with the aid of poetry words fail to express “the beauty of all beauty.” Even he says:

*And burning multitudes pour through my heart, too bright,  
too blind,  
Too swift and hurried in their flight to leave their tale be-  
hind.*

For me therefore to try to tell of what he showed me would be to attempt the impossible, but this crossing of the Atlantic when I was his companion will ever remain the most wonderful experience of my life. For as he talked I reached back to my childhood and down into myself and found something that answered his call. I shall never forget him walking up and down the promenade deck with his cloak flung wide, his beard caught by the wind, reciting his

The quotations from “A.E.”’s poems in this chapter are given by kind permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

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verse in deep tones, while Americans leant forward, craning their necks to catch his words.

*Dusk its ash-grey blossoms sheds on violet skies,  
Over twilight mountains where the heart songs rise,  
Rise and fall and fade away from earth to air.  
Earth renews the music sweeter. Oh, come there.  
Come, acushla, come, as in the ancient times  
Rings aloud the underland with faëry chimes.  
Down the unseen ways as strays each tinkling fleece  
Winding ever onward to a fold of peace,  
So my dreams go straying in a land more fair;  
Half I tread the dew-wet grasses, half wander there.  
Fade your glimmering eyes in a world grown cold;  
Come, acushla, with me to the mountains old.  
There the bright ones call us waving to and fro—  
Come, my children, with me to the ancient go.*

A.E. was a great poet and an artist, but, even more, he was a man. Unlike so many other intellectuals he was approachable and surpassing kind to all, however humble, who might seek his help. I marvelled at his generosity to me and others on the boat. Once I said:

“A.E., is there anybody you can’t tolerate?”

“Only fools,” he replied.

He was the Tagore of the Western World. Like Tagore he was first a seer, yet he had never therefore cut himself off from the world, but ever remained a humanist. He had fought in many a forlorn hope. In the great docker lock-out before the war in Dublin his voice alone was raised in pro-

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test. The Press, the churches, all the comfortably-off, attacked the people for daring to organize against slums and living conditions, which all now recognize as foul blots on Ireland's soul. It was a strange tale, for there was more than one Nicodemus in high places who came to him by night offering aid for the dockers' starving families.

Though he has ever been drawn away from the world of men by eternal beauty, yet he has ever returned, brought back by its cries of pain.

*“Ere I lose myself in the vastness and drowse myself with  
the peace,  
While I gaze on the light and the beauty afar from the dim  
homes of men,  
May I still feel the heart-pang and pity love-ties that I would  
not release;  
May the voices of sorrow appealing call me back to their  
succour again.”*

Coming from association with Park, the scientist, it was strange to meet another whose motto, though so differently expressed, appeared to be the same. Park worshipped Truth, and A.E. had said:

*“One charge alone I give to youth  
Against the sceptred myth to hold  
The golden heresy of truth.”*

So for ten days I sat at his feet and learned more of heaven and earth than in all the other years of my life.

We landed in Liverpool one bleak early morning towards

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the end of March. Having deposited our bags in the station we discovered that we had an hour to wait before the train left. We wandered out into the town. It was cold, a small sleet was falling, there was an ugliness over everything—the sky, the houses, the muddy streets, the people's faces. The trams clanged dismally. The air was full of smoke soot, everything we touched was soiled. After the clean freshness of the sea and the spotless decks of the *Samaria* this appalling drabness sank into us like poison. A.E. sat down upon the steps of the Town Hall. He drew his cloak about him. He retired from that place into himself. I was left alone. I dared not rouse him. He had gone from me. I walked up and down, then went into a shop and bought things from a little Jew man who “did” me. I felt desperately alone.

## CHAPTER XVII

### *The Choice*

I MET HER in a rowing-boat off the Cornish coast, fell in love with her in New York, and now married her on my return from America. It became necessary therefore to obtain a job at once. I found it was impossible then to get the post I wanted in Ireland and so went back once more to the Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London, this time to an appointment in the research department. So one early autumn morning I awoke in a third-class sleeper to find myself once more in Euston.

On arrival in London we took a bed-sitting-room in Bloomsbury while we set about finding somewhere more permanent to live. We looked at flats in Guildford Street, Coram Street, Great Russell Street, and in Great Ormond Street itself. In the latter we found a delightful old oak-panelled house which had been converted into flats, but were obliged regretfully to abandon our find on realizing that it was completely overlooked by the hospital. I had some vivid recollections of scenes I had observed in the very same flats while doing my night rounds as house-physician in the old days, and now had no desire to supply similar instruction myself into ways of young married

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couples to my successors in the hospital, particularly as I would have to meet them at lunch next day.

In the end we found a top flat in an old Georgian house in Brunswick Square. The rent was exorbitant and absorbed about one-third of our income. But we decided it was worth it for the view alone. From its windows it was almost impossible to see anything but trees. Immediately in front were the great plane trees of Brunswick Square, behind them the open ground of the Foundling Site, and behind this again the trees of old Mecklenburg Square. The flat had only two rooms and a tiny kitchen and bathroom; the former, however, were spacious and very pleasant. Somehow this corner of Bloomsbury had escaped the nineteenth century and retained a charm from the pre-industrial revolution days. To us it was a fair island in the urban sea which shut us in on all sides. Here we were able to retire and make-believe that we were living in some old-world town instead of the centre of the biggest city in the world. The flat had its drawbacks, of course; the stairs were very high and steep, and everybody who came to see E. M. Forster in the flat below, or Mrs. Kapp on the ground floor, always rang our bell. Then there were the mice. The people who lived next door on the same level were psychiatrists with a complex about mice and specially fed them with cheese. When they went away on holiday the mice used to come along the pipes into the flats in our house and expect similar entertainment. On being received somewhat coldly they would devour everything in the larders. Neither of us liked using traps on mice that had become accustomed to human hospitality; it would be unfair, we felt, to put cheese

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in a trap after the mice had become accustomed to free cheese with the psychiatrists. But something had to be done as we began to get a neurosis over our porridge in the morning. Once you have caught a mouse in the oatmeal it is impossible to face the little black husks that occur in all porridge without a shrinking feeling of doubt. Research work soon quickened my senses, however, and after a study of the mice's habits I invented a painless way of removing them that even they could hardly have called ungentlemanly. After dinner or whenever our guests were leaving we would say: "Would you mind taking a couple of mice down to the square in a paper bag and leaving them there?"

The guests usually made bets among themselves as to how long it would take us to catch a mouse in a paper bag or would laugh rather grandly at the idea. But it was all very simple. Mice are creatures of habit. Our mice always followed one route through the larder and always jumped off the shelf at the same place when the door was opened. All that was necessary was to hold a brown paper bag below the spot and the mice invariably jumped into it. By this means we managed to keep the mice down to reasonable numbers. In fact after a time they gave us up altogether and congregated in the flat below. On one occasion, hearing screams, I rushed downstairs expecting to find the house on fire, only to discover that the owner of one of the flats below had been pursued into her bathroom by two mice and had there taken refuge in the bath.

About the time when the mice were at their worst we also had trouble with a young pigeon. The workmen at the hospital had been cleaning the gutters and had dislodged

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a number of pigeons' nests. My laboratory boy rescued a young one from them and brought it upstairs into the laboratory in a rabbit's cage. As I couldn't keep it there amidst the cultures I took it home and put it in the bathroom, not knowing then what I do now about pigeons. It was a disgusting creature. At the end of two days the bathroom was literally like a bird's cage. The only place where the bird appeared to get any satisfaction from roosting was on the lavatory lever. Here it sat day and night while it ate huge meals of corn, which form of food it appeared unable to digest at all reasonably. We tried to teach it to fly; first of all in the bathroom, then in desperation by taking it up on the roof and throwing it over the edge; but it just glided down to the square and had to be brought up again. Finally we put it in a tree and told it to "get on with it."

On the whole our life in Bloomsbury was very happy, but to us Brunswick Square was never more than a temporary home.

At first the post which I had obtained in the hospital appeared one of the most hopeless imaginable. Some years before a sum of money had been presented by a philanthropist with the idea of establishing a research fellowship at the hospital into the problem of the cause of rheumatic fever. An old isolation ward had been fitted out as a laboratory and a Scotsman appointed as the first Fellow. He was a Highlander, sensitive and artistic. I had a most depressing interview with him before he left. He said that rheumatic fever was a frightful subject, one which had been the grave of many investigators' reputations during the last fifty years, that nobody in the hospital had helped him, that at times



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he had become quite desperate sitting alone in the laboratory surrounded by green and hæmolytic streptococci, that he couldn't stick another needle into a child or an animal, and that he was now going off to be psycho-analyzed.

When he had gone I found myself in a room containing a microscope, a number of benches, two Bunsen burners, and some test-tubes. I looked out of the window and saw a patient leaving the National Hospital for Nervous Diseases by the back door. She was shaking in every limb, like a negro doing a step dance, as she advanced in little short rushes. I watched, fascinated for some time, then hearing a sound I turned about and saw that the Director of the Pathological Department had entered the laboratory. He spoke rapidly, explained to me that he was sure I would do him credit. I thanked him and asked what he expected me to do.

"Arrive at 9.30 a.m. and leave at 5.30 p.m." he replied, and with a friendly nod departed.

I looked at the microscope; I picked up a test-tube and put it down. I looked out of the window again, the nervous lady was just rounding the bend still in short rushes. I went down to the mess and had a cup of coffee. I met Sheldon.

"You know," he said, "I'm surprised to see you in this job. I don't think much of finicky research."

"Damn you," I said under my breath and went back to the laboratory. Now I looked out of the other window. The sun was falling on the leaves of the plane tree. It stood in a back garden, its trunk spotted, the multi-coloured autumn leaves hanging about it like a shawl. Suddenly a strange excitement came over me; the thrill of a new adventure was

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about me, a sort of premonition of what was to come. I felt exalted, no longer appalled at the apparently hopeless task ahead. I sat down and wrote a letter full of hope for the future and thrill of the present.

Thus started the strangest period of my life. Until now I had acquired only a passing knowledge of certain subjects; I had never attempted to become a real expert in any one. Now I set out to master one problem completely. To do this it was necessary to read all that others had said about it in different countries and to pursue their thoughts to their source and there sift them. I knew that only when I had fought my way through this tangle, and had reached as it were the advancing edge of the subject, would it be possible for me to discover anything myself. So I began to read and read. After some months I formulated a plan of action and took it to Gowland Hopkins at Cambridge.

"It's necessary to have a plan," he said, "for otherwise it would be impossible to do anything, but you will discover something really new only if you have the temerity to abandon your plan and pursue some idea that crosses your path, possibly at right angles to the main *motif* of your scheme."

This was good advice, I knew, but it only accentuated my feeling of isolation, that loneliness that all young research workers feel when they realize that nobody can help them; that success or failure depends solely upon themselves.

The laboratory, without technical assistance, was unworkable, so I went to Walter Fletcher, the secretary of the Medical Research Council, and poured out my hopes and fears to him and asked his aid.

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"I know what you desire to do," he said, "but you are here now, work for us, make your name and then go and do what you have to do. Meanwhile I'll help you."

He was extraordinarily kind and seemed to understand exactly. I went away, humbly grateful, with some slight feeling of confidence for the first time, determined not to let him down. Now the game began in earnest. For a year we worked at the plan with entirely futile results. Experiment after experiment went awry or proved our ideas wrong. Sometimes I became very depressed; we appeared to be fogged, stuck; the spectre of complete failure crept close; the thought of how it would please people to say, "I told you so," was maddening. Every now and then the director came in and suggested publishing a paper or two. This I resisted angrily, knowing that when I got to the point of publishing a negative report I would have to admit defeat to myself.

It was about this time that a nice steady £1,000 a year job, with a pleasant life, few worries, and a static future, fell vacant. They said that if I applied I would almost certainly be appointed. It was a bad moment. For three days and nights I argued with myself. In the end she settled it by reminding me what a Midland provincial town in England feels like in February. And I didn't apply but went on with the work.

Then suddenly one day something turned up, just as Hopkins said it would, bearing no relation at all to what we were doing. We ceased our prepared investigation and set off to follow up the new idea. Life now became full of excitement. I forgot for a time the incessant fog of a Lon-

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don winter and the increasing difficulty of finding a green field within twenty miles of where we lived. I found that it is not only those in the modern world who climb Mount Everest or go under the North Pole in a submarine who experience the thrill of being where men have never been before. Mentally at least, all the thrill that the explorer experiences may now be found, sitting alone in a room with a few scientific instruments, pursuing an idea towards its source.

The problem upon which we were embarked required a combination of pure laboratory work, animal experimentation, and clinical observation. This entailed the most peculiar mental adjustments. Sheldon, who by now had become my enthusiastic partner, had under his care, in a special hospital in Chelsea, a ward filled with boys and girls, varying in age from four to fourteen years, suffering from acute rheumatic heart disease. It was a cheerful sunny room looking out on the river through the branches of the trees on Cheyne Walk. Sometimes the sun would be reflected from the surface of the river with dazzling intensity, at others it looked grey and cross. Always there were boats and barges passing up and down. Here the children remained for many months, becoming altogether used to bed conditions and happy beyond the lot of ordinary healthy children. That this was so was chiefly due to the sister of the ward, a Scots girl, one of the kindest and best people I have ever known.

Sometimes when I would be sitting working at the table I would hear the children talking among themselves about their own affairs. Once we heard one of them who was

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losing ground talking to his next-door neighbour about death. He wondered if he would look as queer as Harry who had gone all puffy and blue last week before he died. Then with equal seriousness they turned to the problem of how to get the mouse into the trap in a certain puzzle, generally popular at that time.

Our work entailed many skin tests and blood examinations, all of which necessitated pricking the children, but so perfect was the harmony in that ward that seldom were there tears and never strained relations between them and us. When we came in they hailed us blithely by our names; when we left yelled good-bye. Needless to say we became very attached to them, and their suffering hurt our minds. It was strange therefore, when one of them died, to perform a post-mortem on the body. A child maybe for whom we had had a particular affection, to whom we had paid special visits and given presents, for whose life we had fought hard. But when the sister rang up and said that she had died we would reply in a different tone:

“Now, sister, you *must* get permission for a post-mortem.”

Often these autopsies took place in the evening. The body of the child would be placed naked on the table in the bright light of the high-powered electric bulbs. For a moment we would pause, looking at the poor discoloured thing that yesterday had been the child, remembering how she had smiled when she had asked us to get her some blue wool for a doll's dress. Then we would commence work, nausea or repugnance at our task completely banished from our minds. Looking back on it all now the whole memory is indescribably mixed. Even in the folder which contains

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the post-mortem records are letters from some of the children.

Then there were the animals which suffered also. To me it seemed harder to have to experiment on them than on ourselves or our patients. Sitting in their cages behind the bars, with frightened reproachful eyes, they tore at the heart. I invented specially painless ways to kill my favourite rabbits. I took them for runs in Brunswick Square and brought them in carrots and nice green things to eat on Sundays. When one of the monkeys died I could not bear the way the other lost all heart and no longer spat at us when we came in, but sat all day with its head in its paws; so I took it back to the monkey shop and restored it to its fellows.

The result of all this was to make other people regard me as thoroughly unsound. The clinicians looked upon me as a brutal vivisector and said so, the scientists as a sentimentalist. Worst of all, however, my athletic activities were regarded by everybody with the gravest suspicion, for in spite of having been away in America for the previous two seasons and being over thirty I took up "rugger" again on returning to London, and on Saturdays I used to disappear from my laboratory as early as possible and go and play for the London Irish. I did this simply because I loved playing "rugger," particularly for the London Irish, whom I captained for several seasons. They were composed of a group of impecunious, unpretentious, and gay young Irishmen. They had not the manners nor mode of speech of the Harlequins with whom I played when I was at King's College Hospital; few of their members could claim a public-school

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training, but they played with an abandon and joy of battle unknown to the other more famous London clubs.

Once I played a great match on a Wednesday, having told the director that I was at the Royal Society of Medicine. A few days before the manager of Surrey had rung me up and asked me to captain the county against Hampshire, who were the best southern team that year. I refused. He pressed me again, he was persistent.

"All right, if you let me select the side," I replied at last. So it was settled and I put five of the London-Irish Club, whose ground had once been in Surrey, into the team. We beat Hampshire by seventeen points, I playing under the assumed name of Robert and being described in the Press as one of the lesser known Harlequins.

So as to be fit enough for the strain of these matches I used to take one or two runs a week round and round Brunswick Square in the early mornings, much to the horror of the intelligentsia of the district, to whom all violent physical exercise seemed unnatural, though I should add that one evening I ran into my twin brother, who under the cloak of darkness had issued forth clad in shorts from his intellectual abode in Guildford Street in order to get a sweat up.

These activities made my hospital colleagues, junior and senior, suspicious of my work. It seemed to me that these people had suffered so much in their youth from the English school system of hero-worship of the athlete, and at their hospitals as students when all the best appointments had gone to the members of the "rugger" teams, that now they felt entitled to get a little of their own back, and in consequence were unwilling to allow one to have it both

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ways. Indeed, all my life I have suffered by being regarded by intelligent people as an athletic Philistine and by the athletic bloods as one of the "wrong sort," so that both high-brows and low-brows make me feel nervous.

While the work was proceeding at high pressure and before our son was born we had little time to look around; but at last the research problem upon which I was working reached completion, was written up, and published. And when Dermot got past the infant stage we began to feel a desperate longing for the country. For though Bloomsbury was our happy refuge it was besieged by a jealous world which hated its serenity, and almost every day some citadel of quiet fell to the attackers. To-day a row of old Georgian houses would be bought up and destroyed, a mass of modern flats taking their place. To-morrow a new traffic route would be arranged, shattering the charm of some old-world square with hideous sounds and smells. So in our battered Austin Seven wet set out to find the country.

But now we discovered that London was joined to Brighton on the south and Reading on the west; that on reaching the South Coast the seashore was covered everywhere with urban people whose pleasure appeared to be to move in herds. Even places like New Romney were suburban and full of persons with peeling red faces, while the roads were horrible beyond the foulest dream. True, we did find, after much search, certain places where the ancient beauty of England still lingered in all its quiet peace.

There was one such spot in Surrey which we often visited. It could only be reached by going up a little stream in a canoe through a private park. In places the current was



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strong and trees hung so closely over the water that it was almost impossible to proceed; indeed, this was our defence, as nobody else ever ventured beyond certain of these rapids, and hence we were safe from intrusion in the little paradise we had found. A meadow of fragrant grass, enclosed by tall elm trees, sloped down to a deep pool situated at a bend in the stream. By the water's edge an old oak tree stood, its branches spreading out and down above the long grass. Here we would halt, securing our canoe to a branch, land, and lie down in the long grass, while the sunshine, filtering through the oak leaves, covered us with a speckled sheen. Just below in the river bank two kingfishers had their nest, and from our retreat amidst the grass stems we used to watch them darting up and down the stream, their bright turquoise blue catching the sun's rays and throwing it back in a flash of immortal loveliness. Here we spent many a happy summer day. Here my first paper was written, sitting in the shade of the oak tree. But even there it was impossible to forget that we were prisoners of the machine age, for not more than three hundred yards away a main road led towards the south-west, and from it came the incessant din of motor horns and the crash of heavy vehicles.

Everywhere the town was spreading out these feelers like some awful monster. The by-pass roads had been built to ease the traffic problem and help to bring the townspeople to the country, but instead they had brought the country people to the town, as each village became another suburb. For their planning had been incomplete and had not taken into consideration the stupidity of man's mind. And along each road had sprung up lines of rotten little houses, each

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group worse built and uglier than the last, and out behind the fields were filled with still uglier bungalows and sheds. Every year England's green and pleasant fields were becoming less pleasant and less green; every year London, and for that matter all the other great cities, were continuing to destroy the land outside them while still retaining their slums within and smoke clouds overhead.

When we asked people why they allowed it to go on, the invariable reply was that the English believe in the freedom of the individual and private enterprise, and to stop ribbon building, abolish the slums, and make smoke a crime, would be to interfere with these great principles.

Gradually a feeling of claustromania came over us; I dared not think because of a lurking fear that some day I would have to "settle down," be part of it all, and give it my loyalty.

Then suddenly the moment arrived which I had been waiting for for seven years. A letter came from Ireland stating that if I returned at once there was a possibility of obtaining an appointment on the staff of the National Children's Hospital, Dublin. The letter arrived without any previous warning, and the difficulties of the situation were immense. Clearly I could not get the job if I remained in London, but to give up my now quite well-paid position, without being sure of obtaining the other first, was said to be madness. Besides, we'd just signed a new lease which would mean dropping £15, and we had no money of our own. De Valera had just formed his government and the English press said Ireland would be ruined in six months. Several Anglo-Irish doctors, we learned, were leaving Dub-

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lin fearing reduced incomes. But this time I had no doubts. I knew that unless I seized this opportunity I would never get the chance again, and so leaving the laboratory, Bloomsbury, and all my friends, sadly but without one misgiving, I set out for home.

. . . . .

To celebrate my return to Ireland as soon after my arrival as possible I took a horse at Delgany and rode up into the hills. It was early autumn and what the Americans call perfect "fall" weather, the sun shining, not directly down as in midsummer, but slantwise, and the air still and clear.

The path from Delgany leads almost straight up the hillside, first passing through a small wood above the Glen of the Downs and then over the open mountainside. I noticed that day for the first time that almost every tree in the wood was of a different kind—oak, larch, pine, Spanish chestnut, rowan, and the rest, their autumn-coloured leaves intermingling and shining in the sun whose beams danced in the foam of a little stream that zigzagged down the hill between their trunks.

Passing over the shoulder of the hill I looked north through a gap in the mountains and saw Killiney Bay shining like a jewel ten miles away. So clear it was that I thought I could make out Kilmore in the trees. At last we reached the open mountain, and my horse stretching himself galloped up the few remaining hundred yards to the crest.

Here in an instant the scene changed. Before us lay

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Calary bog, mile after mile of small hills and little valleys with black bog pools and occasional turf stacks, brown streams, gorse, and heather. The water at Roundwood sparkled in the distance, and behind the mountains rose range after range, their misty purple reaching up towards the blue of the sky.

The wind was strong and smelt of warm earth, heather, and gorse. Filling my lungs, I stood up in the stirrups and shouted for joy. Then off we galloped, over banks, in and out of fields, through streams, at last reaching a big stone-faced bank which we took in our stride, and then halted panting in a green field which stood on the very edge of the plateau. Below, the land fell away for a thousand feet to meet the sea—patches of dark green and light green, yellow, purple, and russet, a thin white line, and then bright blue as far as the eye could see. We were out of the wind; the sun striking a hedge of golden gorse beside me filled the air with heady wafts of scent. I closed my eyes and then half-opened them again. For a moment I got the queer sensation that what I saw wasn't real, that I was dreaming; an awful dread gripped me that I would wake up and find myself in a tram in the Walworth Road heading for Camberwell Green; but the horse straining towards a clump of grass stumbled and shook me. When I looked up again the fear had gone. No, it was not a dream; but my dreams come true.













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